THE PROBLEM OF THE ARMY

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L. S. AMERY

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THE PROBLEM OF THE ARMY

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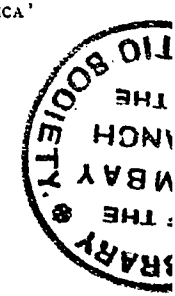
BY

L. S. AMERY

FELLOW OF ALL SOULS COLLEGE, OXFORD,
AND EDITOR OF
THE "TIMES" HISTORY OF THE WAR IN SOUTH AFRICA'



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LONDON
EDWARD ARNOLD
1903

PREFACE

THE general revival of interest in the question of Army Reform which has been the result of the publication of the proceedings of the Royal Commission of Inquiry into the South African War has encouraged me to avail myself of the kind permission extended to me by *The Times* to republish in book form and under my own name the series of articles which appeared in their columns during January and February of this year under the title of 'The Problem of the Army.'

The present work is, however, somewhat more than a mere republication. Most of the chapters have been not only revised, but to a very considerable extent rewritten. A complete additional chapter has been inserted, containing suggestions for the reorganization of the War Office on the lines of Lord Esher's memorandum appended to the report of the War Commission. The defects of Mr. Brodrick's Army Corps scheme of 1901 are more fully analyzed, and an alternative plan, which was only hinted at in the original articles, is now sketched out in some detail.

The figures for the redistribution of the forces which

I have advocated and for the Army budget which that redistribution would involve have been completely recast. Instead of making my basis our present standard of military strength and showing how that standard could be maintained consistently with a very great reduction of expenditure, I have on reconsideration preferred to work up to our present 'normal' expenditure as my outside limit, and to show how, keeping well within that expenditure, we might maintain a far more powerful and effective Army than at present. But the principle of the redistribution which I have advocated remains the same, and is equally applicable, and, I believe, equally sound, whether our military budget is reduced, kept constant, or even increased.

I have refrained from endeavouring to incorporate with the present work any detailed analysis of the evidence before the Royal Commission or criticism of the Commissioners' Report. The fact is that 'The Problem of the Army' is already in itself of the nature of an *ad interim* report on the lessons of the War, based on a mass of evidence fully as large, and in some respects more varied than that given before the Commission—namely, the evidence which I have been collecting during the last four years for the purposes of '*The Times* History of the War'—evidence whose historical bearing and final conclusion will appear in the successive volumes of that work. To have tried to make it include a digest of the War Commission would have meant alter-

ing the whole scope and character of the work. But there is no reason why 'The Problem of the Army' should not serve equally well as a companion to the volumes of evidence before the War Commission as to the detailed narrative of the War. And for the benefit of those who lack either the necessary time or the inclination to study those volumes of evidence for themselves, I have included some of the more striking expressions of opinion given before the Commission by eminent soldiers, as well as a few important memoranda or disquisitions bearing on the questions discussed in my chapters, either in the shape of footnotes to the text or as appendices.

L. S. AMERY.

November 1, 1903.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
I.	THE MILITARY POSITION OF THE EMPIRE	1
II.	MR. BRODRICK'S REFORMS	19
III.	SOUTH AFRICA AND THE HOME ESTABLISHMENT	54
IV.	REDISTRIBUTION: WAYS AND MEANS	82
V.	HOME DEFENCE	92
VI.	NATIONAL MILITARY TRAINING	110
VII.	THE NEED OF AN IMPERIAL STAFF	119
VIII.	BRAIN STARVATION	137
IX.	THE PROBLEM OF THE WAR OFFICE	154
X.	THE SELECTION AND TRAINING OF THE SOLDIER	178
XI.	THE SELECTION AND TRAINING OF OFFICERS	192
XII.	SUMMARY	211

APPENDICES

APPENDIX		
A.	SIR IAN HAMILTON ON THE TACTICAL LESSONS OF THE WAR	231
B.	QUALITY VERSUS QUANTITY	238
C.	QUALITY OF OUR PRESENT MATERIAL	241
D.	SIR T. KELLY-KENNY ON THE RECRUITING PROBLEM	244
E.	THE LACK OF TRAINING-GROUNDS	247
F.	THE WASTE OF THE SOLDIER'S TIME	250
G.	GENERAL FRENCH ON THE LACK OF DECENTRALIZATION	253

APPENDIX PAGE

H.—SUGGESTED DISTRIBUTION OF MILITARY COMMANDS IN THE BRITISH EMPIRE - - - 255

I.—PEACE AND MOBILIZATION STRENGTHS - - 256

J.—SOUTH AFRICA AND INDIA - - - 257

K.—MEMORANDUM BY SIR J. TAUBMAN GOLDIE ON NATIONAL MILITARY TRAINING - - - 262

L.—SIR W. NICHOLSON ON THE HISTORY OF THE QUARTERMASTER-GENERAL'S BRANCH - - 266

M.—LORD ROBERTS AND OTHERS ON STAFF WORK IN PEACE AND IN THE FIELD - - - 272

N.—EVIDENCE OF MAJOR E. H. HILLS ON MAPPING REQUIREMENTS - - - - - 279

O.—LORD ROBERTS ON WAR OFFICE ORGANIZATION - 288

P.—RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE HARTINGTON COMMISSION - - - - - 291

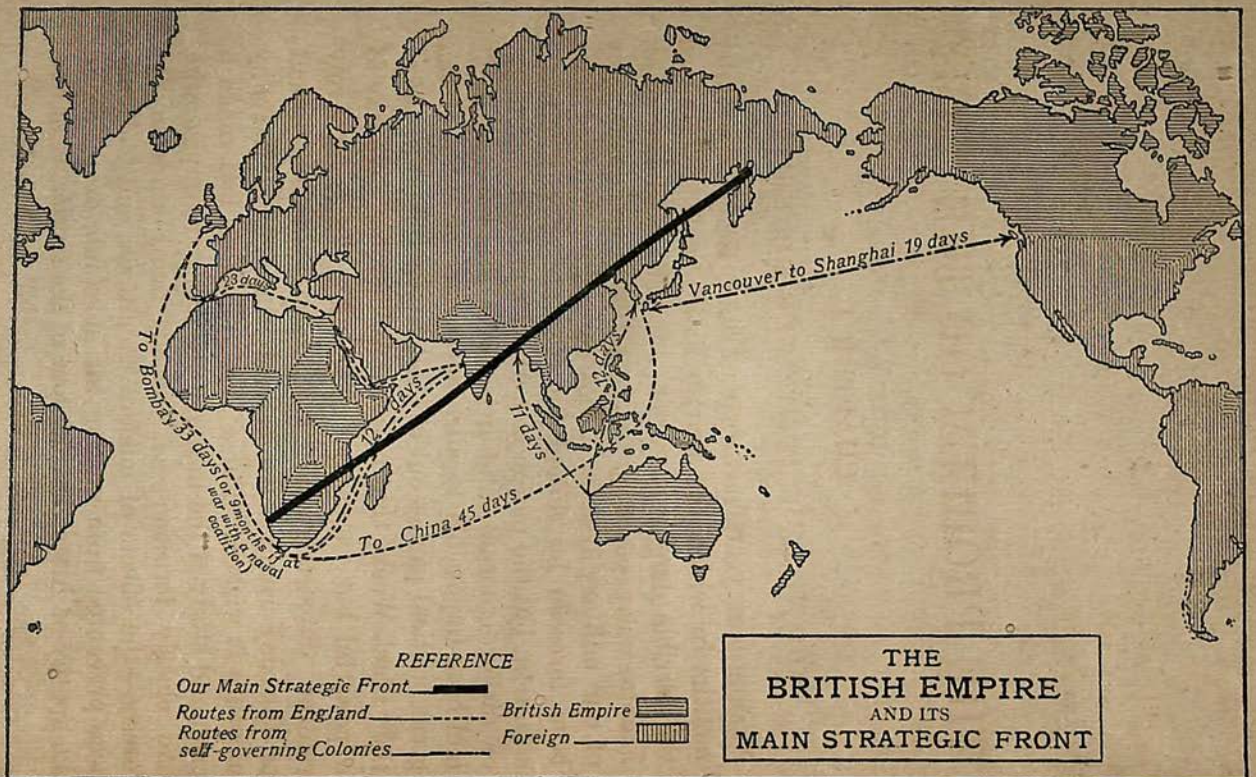
Q.—LORD ESHER'S MEMORANDUM ON WAR OFFICE ORGANIZATION - - - - - 295

R.—PROPOSED DISTRIBUTION OF WORK AMONG THE MILITARY MEMBERS OF THE ARMY BOARD - 302

S.—SIR EVELYN WOOD ON PROMOTION BY SELECTION 303

T.—THE DEFICIENCY OF OFFICERS ON MOBILIZATION 307

INDEX - - - - - - 313


Vancouver to Shanghai 19 days
28 days
To Bombay 33 days (or 9 months if at war with a naval coalition)
10 days
11 days
To China 45 days
REFERENCE
Our Main Strategic Front
Routes from England
Routes from self-governing Colonies
British Empire
Foreign
THE
BRITISH EMPIRE
AND ITS
MAIN STRATEGIC FRONT

THE PROBLEM OF THE ARMY

CHAPTER I

THE MILITARY POSITION OF THE EMPIRE

NEARLY four years have passed since those dark winter months in which the British nation suddenly realized the terrible danger to which our very existence as an Empire was exposed by the inefficiency and inadequacy of our military system. That danger had, indeed, long been foreseen by thoughtful students of our military situation, but the nation as a whole had been indifferent, or rather ignorant, and in view of this indifference it had been impossible to stir the leaders of either of the great political parties out of their habitual inertia. After the 'Black Week' that national indifference gave way to a powerful but vague and inarticulate desire for Army reform. So strong was that desire that the Government of the day could have carried through almost any measure it wished. For a statesman who had made a profound study of the military needs of our Empire, who had clearly foreseen—as, indeed, many students did foresee—the effects of modern conditions, and had only been prevented from putting his ideas into execution by the apathy of his colleagues and of the nation, here was

one of those occasions which occur only once in a generation to statesmen in a democratic country. It was a moment when the iron was hot and ready to be hammered into any shape. But England possessed no statesman with those qualifications. The system of party government does not tend to their development.

In the circumstances, it was perhaps as well that our rulers did not go further than they did in the direction of embodying their first partial impressions into ready-made schemes of wholesale reorganization. Such reforms or alterations as have so far been introduced into the general organization of the British Army, though they have not gone to the root of the matter, have many of them been in the right direction, or, at any rate, have done no irretrievable harm. Since then there has been ample opportunity for the main lessons of the war to disentangle themselves from the confused and misleading impressions of the moment. The time has now come when the nation can fairly take stock of its general requirements for the military defence of the Empire, and of the more special lessons of the war as far as they bear upon those requirements. Though the demand for military reform is, perhaps, not so loud as in the opening months of 1900, it is no less strong and much more definite. So strong is it that no Government can afford to disregard it. The question is one that can bear no longer delay or half measures. The cost of our present inadequate system is too great and the possibility of danger in the future too serious.

The first question that it is necessary to answer, in discussing the subject of Army reform, is, What are the fundamental conditions of the naval and military defence of our Empire, and what part of that defence is best

assigned to the Army?* First and foremost, then, our Empire is an oceanic Empire. Strategically considered, it is an Empire the greater part of which consists of the sea. Our most important strategic frontier is the seacoast of other nations, and that frontier can be kept inviolate by naval supremacy alone. Our naval supremacy is the keystone of our whole defensive position. Not only is it the most important issue in itself, but it also limits the military problem by the consideration of expense. Our military expenditure must always be the balance of what we can afford to spend after making sure that we have satisfied our naval needs. Even with our great wealth we cannot aim at being at the same time the leading sea Power in the world and a first-class military Power in the sense in which those words are understood on the Continent of Europe.

The problem we have to solve is, therefore, how to make the best possible use of the land forces we can afford to maintain, utilizing our naval supremacy to the fullest in our military dispositions, employing our Army,

* 'Let us give up this wandering on in a fog as we have done for years and years, getting a little bit here and a little bit there, but with no definitely laid down clear and clean plan to work up to a previously determined upon and settled organization.'—9,470: MAJOR-GENERAL SIR C. GROVE.

'I was twenty-five years in the War Office, and every year we asked that last question (What is the Army the Commander-in-Chief is to maintain, and for what purposes is it required?), and we never succeeded in getting it answered, except once, and then it was answered wrong.'—15,638: GENERAL SIR R. BULLER.

'What strikes me is that it is very desirable, before any question of either increase or decrease is raised, the nation should pretty well determine what the Army has got to do.'—13,221: FIELD-MARSHAL LORD ROBERTS.

not as an expensive alternative to the Navy, but as a complement to it, a striking arm to reach where the Navy cannot reach. Even so, without maintaining a numerically large Army, we can be formidable enough on land. The proper combination of military and naval strength contains possibilities that even England, with her great record in the eighteenth century and during the Napoleonic wars, has never yet developed to their full logical conclusion. There is a passage in Emerson's 'English Traits' which expresses in striking language the nature of the strategical power that lies in the hands of those who have the supremacy of the sea:

'The men who have built a ship . . . have acquired much more than a ship. Now arm them, and every shore is at their mercy; for if they have not a numerical superiority where they anchor, they have only to sail a mile or two to find it. Bonaparte's art of war—namely, of concentrating force on the point of attack—must always be theirs who have the choice of the battle-ground.'

Given, then, the complete subordination of our military policy to our general policy of oceanic defence, the question that next arises is, Where, if we do fight on land at all, are we likely to fight? The answer to that question is, perhaps, best given by the method of exclusion. In the first place, it is not on the mainland of Europe. We have no aggressive designs against the territory of any of the Continental Powers, and we cannot afford to keep up armies large enough ever to cope with theirs on ground of their own choosing. If through any circumstances we should come into conflict with any of these Powers or any combination of them, the struggle will be decided at sea, and in those outlying

parts of their possessions where, owing to our command of the sea and to their distance from their bases, we can hope to fight them on land with success. But if any future combination of circumstances should make it imperative for us to decide a struggle with a European Power in its own home territory, it will not be with our small Regular Army that we can venture to undertake such a task. We could only do it by shipping across the sea the whole manhood of the country trained in the use of arms.* The same applies to the continent of America. There we have a land frontier of some 3,000 miles, adjoining one of the greatest Powers in the world. But there, again, we have no political ambitions that will be likely to bring us into conflict with the United States, no causes of friction that diplomacy and national good feeling could not dispose of. Nor is there any present indication that the United States cherish aggressive designs against Canada.

There remain the two continents of Africa and Asia. There we hold enormous territories on the mainland, inhabited by races whose obedience to our rule is in the last resort only determined by our military superiority, with extended frontiers exposed to the attacks of hardy savage tribes, and in the case of India to the advance of

* 'We are very unlikely to attack any Continental Power—I mean to say our business is in India and South Africa; but we must have an expanding nucleus, and the more intelligent our men are and the more highly trained they are the better it would be, and if any big efforts are required of us we must do the same as we did during the South African War—we must increase our forces very largely; but we cannot expect to get trained men, though we should get very good ones, no doubt. The country cannot keep up an army for a general purpose of that sort—I mean to say for the purpose of offence.'—16,820: MAJOR-GENERAL SIR W. GATACRE.

one of the greatest military empires in the world. Outside of our actual possessions we have in those regions a vast complex of political and commercial interests which may at any moment bring us into conflict with one or more of the great European Powers. South Africa, Eastern and North-Eastern Africa—including Egypt and Abyssinia—Arabia, Mesopotamia, Persia, Afghanistan, India, Indo-China, China, Siberia—that list covers almost the whole of the countries in which in any conceivable circumstances we may be called upon to conduct large operations on land. They form the eastern or south-eastern face of the Old World, and their general strategical distribution may very roughly be indicated, as in the map at the beginning of this book, by a line drawn from the Cape to Kamschatka. That line is the strategical 'front' of the British Empire, under the political conditions that are likely to prevail for a generation to come.* Elsewhere the only purpose for which we require any considerable number of troops is for the garrisoning of our existing naval bases in peace, and the possible seizure of new ones in war. But this is a problem so entirely different from the main problem of Imperial military strategy—being, in fact, a part of the problem of naval strategy—that it is better dealt with on separate lines.

The logical corollary from this definition of our military position is that our striking arm, the Imperial

* The use of the word 'front' here was, when the original articles appeared in the *Times*, objected to by certain critics, who apparently interpreted it as equivalent to 'frontier.' All I wish to indicate by the term is the general direction in which our armies will have to face. Our enemies will move towards that line on the one side; our reinforcements will push towards it or beyond it from the other.

Regular Army, should face towards that military front, and be concentrated at points as near as possible to it, and not kept in those parts of the Empire whose defence is already sufficiently provided by the Navy, or whence the striking arm cannot be quickly brought into action for offensive purposes. A considerable portion of our Army and a still larger native force are already permanently stationed in India, the central point and keystone of our military position. But the climatic conditions of India, and of some of the other regions where we may be called upon to carry on war, make it undesirable to keep more white troops actually stationed there than is absolutely necessary for safety. What remains, then, is to base our Army, as much of it as can be spared from India, at points within a reasonably close distance of our strategic front, and at the same time enjoying a healthy climate and affording ample opportunities for training.

The United Kingdom, though healthy enough, and in many other ways very convenient, does not meet either of the other two all-important requirements. It is separated from our military front by the whole bulk of Europe, Africa, and Asia, and the only short-cut available—the Suez Canal—is one on whose security in time of war we cannot absolutely reckon. Fortunately, the geographical distribution of our Empire provides us with a chain of positions which meets with almost every military requirement. South Africa, Australia, and Canada form a line every point of which is within a fortnight's steaming of the nearest part of our military front.

More than that: a consideration of our naval position, of the distribution and power of movement of our own

and other fleets, will show that in the event of war with a European coalition the main struggle of the battle-fleets will take place in the Mediterranean, or off the western coasts of Europe. Till this struggle is absolutely decided, the convoying of large bodies of troops across these waters will be attended with the greatest difficulty and danger. In fact, the Admiralty have repeatedly refused to give any pledge to convoy troops out of England for at least nine months from the outbreak of a great naval war. On the other hand, our naval supremacy in the outlying seas will hardly be challenged. A few cruisers will suffice for all the convoying required in the Southern Atlantic, the Indian Ocean, and the Pacific. The strategical immunity of these seas is of far more consequence for the speedy movement of troops than any question of actual sea-mileage or availability of transports. The difference between sending troops to India from South Africa and from this country in a great war is not a question of ten or twelve days as against thirty, but a question of ten days, or even twenty days, as against ten months.

No distribution, then, of our military forces can be strategically justified that does not look first and foremost to South Africa, and then to Australia and Canada, as the main bases of our Regular Army. These islands may, no doubt, for generations to come remain the best recruiting-ground for our Imperial Army—the home of the bulk of our reservists, and of that greater reserve which we must seek in the trained manhood of the nation, the storehouse of our wealth, and the centre of political power. They are the ultimate military-economic base of our Army. But for the main strategical bases and training-grounds we must look elsewhere.

The Army that we can afford to keep in those regions must necessarily be small—small, that is, compared with the armies kept up by the great European Powers, but it by no means follows that it need, therefore, be too small for its purpose. The great European armies of the present day are institutions whose origin and organization are intimately connected with the peculiar conditions under which they are called to operate. It is only in countries with a dense population, with enormous stores of supplies in every town and village, with abundant water, with an intricate network of roads and railways, that armies of the magnitude of modern European armies are at all manageable. And even then the management of them presents difficulties which, as many of the ablest continental strategists recognise, will steadily tend to make all but the simplest and most elementary strategical movements impossible. The deadlock which the late M. de Bloch conceived would be the result of any future European war is by no means an altogether extravagant supposition. In Asia and Africa the problem is an absolutely different one. In vast regions thinly peopled, where water and supplies are alike scarce, railways few and limited in carrying power, and roads execrable or non-existent, the size of armies that can operate with any success is strictly limited. On the other hand, in consequence of that limitation all the advantages of adequate information and preparation, of suitable equipment, of mobility, of a high state of training, and of individual skill in the soldier and of generalship in the leaders, are greatly enhanced.

The Foreign Service Army that we want must, therefore, differ not only in numbers, but also in its whole

character, from the armies that are found to be most effective in Europe. And for this purpose it is necessary to remember that England is a European country. The Army that we want for Imperial purposes is not likely, either in respect of its numbers or its character, to be as serviceable for the defence of England against the possible landing of a European invading force as a far cheaper force raised separately for that special purpose. One of the first essentials of any proper scheme of Imperial defence is a clear separation between the Imperial Army, universal as the Navy and in closest co-ordination with it, and the local supplementary defence forces of Great Britain, or of any other self-governing portion of the Empire.

Given, then, the fundamental conditions on which any workable system of Imperial defence must be based, we may next inquire how far the lessons that we have learnt in the recent South African War, and the new conditions of warfare that the war has revealed, bear on those general conditions. To establish what are the main lessons of the South African War, it may, perhaps, be best to begin by asking what were the main causes of our failure to succeed in carrying the war through within a reasonable time. To put the matter briefly, we failed, first, because we did not know enough either about the enemy we were going to fight, or about the country we were going to fight in, or about the methods of fighting that were most effective against that enemy and in that country. We failed, secondly, because of our original false strategical disposition. With the bulk of our Army more than 6,000 miles away from the scene of operations when the war broke out, we were bound to lose at the beginning, and that loss it took us nearly

three years to make good.* Thirdly, our forces, both officers and men, were not adequately trained, either for war in general or for the extremely difficult novel conditions introduced by the long-range rifle and smokeless powder. The result was that, in spite of our numerical superiority, we were unable to crush with any promptitude a far smaller force, mainly because that force, in spite of other very great defects, was more mobile, possessed a higher level of individual skill and initiative than our own, and was first in the field at the outbreak of war.

In other words, the three main lessons of the South African War are: First, that it is necessary to have an adequate organization, which will combine the collection of information with the control of military policy—that is to say, a proper 'brain of the Army'; secondly, that our troops must be placed where they can be strategically effective at the outbreak of any probable war; and, lastly, that the important factor in modern war will be not so much numbers as mobility and a high state of individual and combined efficiency.

Now let us take these points as they bear on the general situation. The first point is obvious, and has been obvious to every careful student of military affairs for the last generation. The creation of a great General Staff, such as exists in every army in Europe, and is far more essential for our Army, with its varied tasks, than

* 'Do you think, if we had had 30,000 or 40,000 troops in South Africa six months before war was declared, the Boers would have attacked us?'—'No; there would have been no war.'—5,172: MAJOR-GENERAL SIR J. ARDAGH.

'I suggest that if we had sent out the 50,000 or 60,000 troops to South Africa three or four months before the war, the war might never have occurred?'—'Not in this generation.'—4,276: FIELD-MARSHAL SIR E. WOOD.

for any other, was advocated in the strongest terms by Lord Hartington's Commission thirteen years ago. It has not been brought into existence yet, and there can be no stronger condemnation of the military policy of successive Secretaries of State, from Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman down to Mr. Brodrick, than that fact alone.

The second lesson only endorses in the strongest way the conclusions already drawn from the general survey of our military position. The main body of our troops must have speedy and certain access to our strategic front. The clearest lesson to be drawn from the war, if we have not learnt it already from a general consideration of our position, is that the bulk of the Regular Imperial Army is out of place in the United Kingdom.

The third lesson is one that can only be welcome to us, substantiating as it does in the strongest possible way what has already been said about the disadvantages of large armies in uncivilized countries and at great distances from their bases. We cannot in any case afford to maintain a large Army abroad. We are bound to keep a considerable part of that Army with the colours for a longer period than is usual in European armies. We have, therefore, every inducement to get the best material possible for our soldiers, and to try and train that material to a pitch of individual efficiency that has never been contemplated elsewhere.* Our command of the sea gives us a strategical mobility far exceeding that of any railway system outside of Central Europe. Steady foresight applied to our preparations and a proper composition of our forces should secure mobility on the march and in the field.

So far I have been reasoning entirely in the abstract.

* See Appendix A.

I have assumed the Empire as a whole, and based my considerations on the present and probable future trend of Imperial policy. I have taken no consideration of the military system which is at the present time established. That system, which received its present form under the influence of that great organizer, Lord Cardwell, was based on the fundamental supposition that there should always be the same number of units of Regular troops in the United Kingdom as in the rest of the Empire. Judged by the standard of a sound system of Imperial defence, such as I have outlined in the beginning of this chapter, that supposition cannot be regarded as other than utterly unsound.

To understand how it was possible that such a system could spring up, one must go back to the conditions of the time in which it was created. We must remember, first, that in 1870 the full meaning of sea supremacy had almost been forgotten by Englishmen, and that its realization, due in no small measure to the works of an American writer, has only come about within the last decade. The necessity of having a considerable land force of Regular troops in England to resist invasion was then and almost up to the present day considered axiomatic. In fact, the main object of the Cardwellian scheme as originally devised was by means of a Reserve to create a larger Army for the defence of this country.

Further, it must be remembered that thirty years ago we were practically the only Power in the oceanic world; the scramble for Africa had not been thought of. Russia had not yet reached Merv, still less Penjdeh or Port Arthur. There was no British occupation of Egypt, no Persian question, no Siamese question, and, last of all, no Chinese question. Our Army abroad was regarded

not so much as a striking force, ready to carry out our policy in those regions where the Navy could not act, but as a garrison to hold India and one or two other points considered of importance. Practically speaking, the defence of England and the maintenance of our hold on India were the only points to which the Cardwellian system looked.

If one were to ask what was uppermost in the minds of those who inspired and supported the Cardwellian reforms, one might look for an answer, on the one hand, to the spectacle of France crushed down by the overpowering numbers of the Prussian armies; and, on the other, to the recollection of the terrible storm of mutiny that had swept through India as a result of the insufficiency of the white garrison. But whatever the considerations that originally led to the creation of the existing system, they have long ceased to carry any weight. A juster estimate of the nature of sea power has led us to look to it for the real defence of these islands, supplemented, if necessary, by local forces economically organized for purely English conditions. The developments of a generation have established our internal position in India on a securer basis, and the maintenance of our rule within the peninsula has gradually become secondary to the ever-growing question of frontier defence. Above all, the gradual change of our political ideal from that of an island state with outlying possessions and dependencies not forming an integral part of its existence to that of a great oceanic federation requires a complete reorganization of the material weapons whereby the newer and greater ideal is to be helped forward and defended.

For many years past, long before the strain of the

South African War dislocated it from top to bottom, the Cardwellian system was growing more and more unworkable. As our Imperial policy developed, we found ourselves obliged to strengthen one outlying point of the Empire after another. The linked battalion organization of the existing system compelled us, for each battalion added abroad, to add an extra battalion at home. The expenditure on our Regular Army kept on steadily growing. By the year 1899 our military budget had risen to over 20 millions; 19 millions of that money went to maintain a force of 184,000 Regulars with the colours—exclusive of the British Army in India—and a first-class Reserve of 78,000 men. Of these, at the outbreak of the South African War, we had some 106,000 Regulars and the whole of the First-Class Reserve in the United Kingdom. Presumably, then, we had a force of some 180,000 Regulars ready to send abroad—a very formidable force, even if, owing to its being concentrated at a false strategic base, it was likely to arrive late on the scene of operations. Unfortunately, this large force only existed on paper. The force actually available at short notice was less than two-thirds of the figure given. In the late war it took over eighteen months before 180,000 regular troops had been sent out to South Africa.

The reason for this was that the recruiting requirements for so large a force of Regular troops had far outstripped the number of serviceable recruits who could be attracted by a service whose pay was inadequate, and which insisted on a period with the colours too short for a career and too long to give the soldier any chance in the race of life afterwards. Nearly 40 per cent. of the 106,000 men at home with the colours were in consequence undersized, undeveloped striplings, whom it

would have been sheer murder to send to the front.* Even as it was, in any other country but South Africa the greater part of the soldiers sent out as reinforcements after the end of 1899 would have died off like flies. Hence the Reserve, instead of being used as a Reserve, was required to take the place of the greater part of the nominal fighting line before a single battalion could leave England. The battalions which were sent out were not the battalions that their officers had been training at home; they were composite battalions made up in almost equal proportions of Reservists and men with the colours, and at the very moment when company officers most wanted to see the effect of their past training they found their companies filled up with men whom they did not know, many of whom had never even seen or handled a Lee-Enfield rifle. Even apart from a war of such magnitude as the war in South Africa, we could not in 1899, and we cannot to-day, send a force of even 20,000 men abroad at short notice without calling upon the Reserve or else mixing up battalions.

Since the war the situation has grown infinitely worse. We have to find a large force, not likely for many years to be less than 25,000, for South Africa. The political problems along what I have called our military front threaten to become acuter than ever; any moment may see us engaged in a struggle of the very first magnitude in the Middle or Far East. Our Reserve, even before the war, was only about two-thirds of what it ought to have been, calculating from the number of recruits enlisting, simply because sickness, desertion, and other causes dependent on the inferior

* 'Out of the 100,000 for whom we were drawing pay, there were between 35,000 and 40,000 non-effectives.'—4,135: Sir E. Wood.

quality of the material caused a wastage of nearly half the recruits enlisted before they ever reached the Reserve. At this moment, as a result of the war, the Reserve stands even lower than before the war, and will not reach its nominal strength for years. Our military budget, which before the war had exceeded 20 millions, has now reached the enormous figure of 27½ millions, and under the present system there is not the slightest possibility of keeping it within the limits of that 'normal' budget, still less of reducing it. And yet, with all this enormous cost, with the whole of England covered by army corps of Regulars which are not wanted in the country, our military position is actually no sounder than it was before, and, relatively to the needs of our policy, far worse than at any past time.

Nothing can be done without a thorough-going change of our whole system to meet the present requirements of the Empire. The ill-considered patchwork and adding on of battalion after battalion, without any consideration of where forces are most wanted and where they can be spared, must be abandoned. As it stands, our Army system provides the largest possible force on paper and the least in reality. It provides the largest possible force in England, where it is not wanted, and the least possible force in those parts of the world where it is wanted. It renders the temporary reinforcement of any part of the Empire impossible, except at the cost of the breakdown of the whole system, and it cannot wage even a comparatively small war without the calling out of the Reserve. It provides no adequate training-ground for the kind of fighting that our Regular Army will be called upon to undertake abroad, or, indeed, for any kind of fighting whatever under modern conditions.

It is incompatible with any really workable scheme of decentralization. It has no proper staff organization, and with a vast expenditure of money on the maintenance of superfluous battalions it starves the intelligence and educational departments, the very mainsprings of military efficiency, to a degree that is almost incredible. In other words, the existing system is nothing less than a gigantic sham, and a fraud on the taxpayer.*

* 'I think that the country has an impression that this paper Army is an effective Army, but it is not.'—4,876: LIEUTENANT-GENERAL SIR T. KELLY-KENNY.

'I am certain it would be much more satisfactory to the nation, even if they paid much more, to have a really efficient Army, instead of the make-believe that we have now.'—4,203: SIR E. WOOD.

CHAPTER II

MR. BRODRICK'S REFORMS

In the preceding chapter I discussed the general requirements of Imperial military defence, in view, on the one hand, of the strategical disposition of our Empire and the probable course of British policy, and, on the other hand, of the main lessons of the South African War. The conclusions drawn from the former were shown to be reinforced in the strongest way by our recent experience, and both together pointed to the utter inadequacy of the Cardwellian system to cope with the needs of the present day. Before going on to consider the changes that will be necessary to secure, within the limits of expenditure available after making all due provision for the Navy, an Army that will serve our purposes, it is, perhaps, advisable to go a little more closely into the present state of affairs, and more especially to discuss the value and bearing of those modifications which have been superimposed on the existing system during the last three years by the late Secretary of State for War.

The first and foremost point worth noting is that they are only modifications, not radical changes in organization. At no time did Mr. Brodrick show the slightest indication of a desire to interfere with the fundamental

theory laid down by Lord Cardwell—viz., that the defence of these islands is one of the chief tasks of the Regular Army, and that at least one half of the Regular Army, exclusive of the Reserves, should always be located in the United Kingdom. On the contrary, the most important measure which he introduced during his period of office was concerned with the organization of the Regular Army in England on an even larger scale than had ever been contemplated before.

The motives which inspired Mr. Brodrick in framing his scheme of army corps for the United Kingdom were undoubtedly praiseworthy ones. His main object, clearly set forth in his speeches, was to improve the training of general officers, and to ease the congestion of work at the War Office by a system of decentralization. The principle was good. The mistake lay in its application. Mr. Brodrick seems never to have considered whether army corps were the most suitable formation for our little Army in the field, or the best administrative unit in peace for our peculiar conditions; nor whether, apart from those considerations, so large a force as six army corps—three wholly and three partly composed of Regulars—were really wanted in England at all; whether the nation could stand the expense of keeping them up, in addition to the forces which are required elsewhere in the Empire; or whether the exigencies of Imperial affairs would ever allow them to attain to any stable organization.

The question of the advisability of keeping the bulk of our Regular Army in the United Kingdom has been discussed already, and the conclusion arrived at was very different from that which Mr. Brodrick was prepared to acquiesce in. As regards the question of

expense, even on the supposition that the South African garrison is to be reduced to twelve battalions of infantry—a supposition which is not likely to be converted into fact for a good many years, and one which, even if it were realizable, as far as the internal safety of South Africa is concerned, would be in the highest degree undesirable in view of the general strategical situation of the Empire—the cost of the Regular Army which we should then be called on to keep up, especially under the new rates of pay, would continue to rise steadily till it reached a 'normal' figure far in excess of anything that we can afford. With the steady growth of the naval armaments of other Powers we cannot afford to go on indefinitely adding to the cost of our Army.

But the worst of the scheme is that it is never likely to be carried into effect. Like so much in our present Army system, it is almost bound to be a sham. It presupposes a 'normal condition' of the Empire which is to be arrived at in a year or two, when the South African garrison can be reduced. It entirely shuts its eyes to the fact that, in all probability, long before the South African garrison has reached its 'normal' strength of twelve battalions, we shall be wanting to strengthen some other outlying portion of our Empire by reinforcements which, whether large or small, will be large enough to upset the carefully-devised balance on which the army corps scheme is based. It also seems to presuppose that the ordinary course of a war in any part of the world will consist of the sending out for a certain number of weeks or months of an army corps from England, which will then return home immediately on the conclusion of hostilities. It makes no

allowance either for the gradual concentration of forces on a point that is threatened in order to avert war, if possible, or to be prepared for it when it comes, or for the necessity, after a war, of maintaining a considerable force in the region which has been the scene of warlike operations, and may, probably, still be the centre of political disturbance. In other words, the scheme is both unstrategical and impracticable, based, as it practically is, on the presumption of continuous peace—a rather curious presumption for the organization of an army. The outbreak of any war in any part of the world, whether small or great, will at once upset the whole machinery of the system, and reduce the army corps once more to mere paper organizations such as they are at present.

Nor is it easy to see how army corps of a composition so fluctuating and so liable to waste, and intended for so many different requirements, can ever be decentralized in any real sense of the word. Decentralization implies that within each army corps area all the functions of an army for peace or war are, as far as possible, to be united under one head. Not only the training, but the recruiting, housing, provisioning, and mobilizing of the troops, their despatch to the front and their command in war, should be entirely under the commanders of army corps. That state of affairs is possible in the German Army. It would be quite possible in the case of a Militia Army organized for the defence of the United Kingdom. It exists, to a large extent, in the Indian Army, where the separate commands are real strategical and geographical units with definite military problems before them. It could be made to exist in the case of the Regular force kept in South Africa. But it is almost impossible to de-

centralize army corps of Regulars kept in England to serve two such different objects as home defence and foreign expeditions.

Take, for example, the First Army Corps. How can it be possible to give any real decentralized power to the commander of an army corps whose command is defined as follows—

'From the railway-station at Liss, north-eastwards along the South-Western Railway (but omitting the three small portions of Sussex lying to the north of the railway, and the portions of the parishes of Artington, St. Nicholas, and Stoke-next-Guildford to the west of the railway), through Woking to the eastern boundary of Woking parish . . . but inclusive also of the portions of the parishes of Alton and Chawton lying west of that road.'

That is not an army corps command: it is merely a small training area on which is camped an army corps without a command. The commander of that army corps is not likely ever to conduct operations in his command. If his force is required for the defence of England it will at once be moved into the areas nominally assigned to the Second or Fourth Army Corps. If the whole or part of his force is wanted abroad, neither the port of embarkation nor the headquarters of the railway system by which he is to convey his troops to the port is within his command.* Neither strategy, mobilization, nor information can fall within his province.

* 'On several occasions I have urged that general officers commanding army corps should arrange for the moving of units within the United Kingdom, and carry out the movement without any reference to headquarters. However, it is said that there is some difficulty about the railway companies, or something of that sort; I do not know what it is.'—18,221: LIEUTENANT-GENERAL SIR W. NICHOLSON. See also Appendix G.

It is doubtful if the general public at all realizes how entirely Mr. Brodrick's army corps exist on paper even now, and how little opportunity they can afford of real independent training for our Generals and staff officers. A study of the September number of the 'Army List' furnishes some very curious reading. The First Army Corps at Aldershot, under General French, nominally contains three divisions, each of two brigades; in other words, 24 battalions of infantry. At the present moment there are 19 battalions at Aldershot, and at the autumn manœuvres the First Army Corps was able to take the field with two and a half divisions, a cavalry brigade and some mounted infantry. The three divisional commanders are, all, it is worth noting, also brigadiers of one of their brigades, and this violation of all sound principles of organization prevails in all the army corps. Still, the First Army Corps, which is not really a territorial army corps, but a large camp of training with an inadequate training-ground, showed at the manœuvres what a good use it had made of its limited opportunities.

It is when we come to the other army corps that we really see what Mr. Brodrick's organization means. The constitution of the Second Army Corps is more complicated than any other, for it incorporates with the new army corps scheme the older district organization, and its commander is responsible, not only for the organizing and training of an army corps for active service, but also for the defence of the whole coast from the mouth of the Thames almost to Anglesey, and for the garrisoning of our most important harbours. The task of organizing this extraordinary complex of home defence and foreign service requirements could not have been

entrusted to a more capable organizer than Sir E. Wood; but it is a task that ought not to be entrusted to a single head, however able. The actual forces, however, even including the troops quartered in the garrison towns, and presumably required for their defence, are very far from being up to the strength requisite to put an Army Corps into the field. The force at Salisbury, Sir E. Wood's headquarters, consists apparently of some batteries of field artillery, and sundry detachments of the Army Service Corps, the Army Medical Corps, and the Army Ordnance Corps. Sir Evelyn Wood has, indeed, under him a divisional commander, Sir Charles Knox, who commands the Fourth Division and the Seventh Brigade, and, for all purposes that matter, might just as well command the Eighth Brigade also, as neither of these brigades consists of any men.* The Fifth Division of the Second Army Corps in the South-Eastern District is not quite so badly off. It has five Regular battalions, a provisional battalion, and some details. In other words, it has at least one brigade, the Tenth, in addition to the garrison of Dover Castle. The Ninth Brigade does not exist (at least, not in this Army Corps); but as a substitute Sir Leslie Rundle is also entrusted with the duty of defending Dover. The Western District, under Lieutenant-General Sir W. Butler, includes the Sixth Division, which has no divisional commander and no brigadier for the one brigade of which it consists.

* 'Are the regiments in your division now at Salisbury up to their full strength?'—'There is no division yet. When the barracks are built in about four years' time, there will be a division there; but at present that division is quartered, some at Plymouth and some at Pembroke Dock, and all over the place. I could go and see my regiments if I liked any day, but they are all under other Generals.'—17,691: MAJOR-GENERAL SIR C. E. KNOX.

The Southern District, under Lieutenant-General Sir Baker Russell, has a brigadierless brigade, which presumably belongs to the Sixth Division. In all, by borrowing from the Fourth Army Corps a cavalry regiment, three battalions of Guards, and sundry details to fill up battalions that were too weak for manœuvre purposes, the Second Army Corps managed, for the September manœuvres, to put in the field two divisions and a weak cavalry brigade; in other words, two-thirds of an army corps! By a simple and economical device, the Sixth Division, which has no commander, was commanded by Sir C. Knox, commander of the non-existent Fourth Division! And this army corps is supposed to be ready to go abroad at a moment's notice, with every constituent unit complete and under its own commander!

The Third Army Corps in Ireland is, in some respects, rather better off. The Seventh Division can boast of seven battalions of Regulars, one divisional commander, one brigadier for the division, and a cavalry brigade. The Eighth Division, too, has actually eight battalions, though apparently it is not yet divided into brigades; the same being the case with the Ninth or Belfast Division, which consists of four battalions of Regulars. The Fourth Army Corps came into existence—on paper—early this year. It contains one division, the Tenth, which consists of one brigade of Regulars. It also contains an odd brigade, the Guards or Ninth, whose number shows that it can when convenient—as, for instance, at manœuvres—be made to figure in the Second Army Corps! Any further attempt to develop the army corps organization does not appear to have been made; the staff for the Eleventh and Twelfth Divisions and the

Twentieth, Twenty-first, Twenty-second, and Twenty-third Brigades have, as yet, not even come into existence on paper. Its cavalry consists of one regiment, which, when I last saw it, was figuring as a prominent element in the Second Army Corps. As for the Fifth and Sixth Army Corps, they have not, as yet, even begun to pretend to exist, and, I trust, never will.

Altogether, Mr. Brodrick's army corps are very much like the King's robes in one of Hans Andersen's fairy tales, which everyone made belief to see till some child in the street cried out, 'But the King has got nothing on!' This is as far as we have got in sixteen months since the war, and two and a half years since the army corps system was instituted. It cannot be said the progress has been very rapid, nor are there any signs that it will be much more rapid in the future. Nothing is further from my mind than any intention of suggesting that either Mr. Brodrick or the War Office authorities or the army corps commanders have been remiss in carrying into execution the programme that was laid down with so much circumstance two and a half years ago. On the contrary, they have done everything that could be done to convert the army corps into something real. Circumstances were against them, and, what is still more to the purpose, will always be against them. He would be a rash person, indeed, who would wager that Mr. Brodrick's army corps will reach their 'normal' condition before the next considerable war that the British Empire will be called upon to wage.

The truth of the matter is that the attempt to organize the British Army on the pattern of the continental army corps system has been made without sufficient regard to the essential differences between our military organiza-

tion and that of the European Powers. It is not, however, Mr. Brodrick who is really responsible for introducing a false standard of organization into this country. He found it existing on paper, and in his strenuous, unimaginative fashion at once determined to translate it into a reality without pausing to inquire whether, off paper, it was really a workable system for British conditions. It is only the fact that the continuance of the war prevented Mr. Brodrick's 1901 scheme existing in any more tangible form than its predecessors till a year ago that prevented an earlier outbreak of the criticism that has been so vigorously directed against it since the beginning of the present year. Much of that criticism has been too confused for the general public to understand. For while some of the critics of the scheme have really only had in view the number of troops and the expense involved, others the mistaken principle of entrusting the defence of England to the Regular Army, and others, again, the unsuitability of the organization itself to our conditions, all have made use of the words 'army corps' as the exemplification of what they most objected to. The two former points have been, or will be, dealt with at length in these chapters; but as regards the third, it may perhaps be as well at this point to endeavour to analyze the fundamental principles that underlie the army corps organization of continental armies, and to see how far they can be fitted into our system.

The field organization of an army like the German is based on a careful study of the psychology of command in the field. It is held that a commanding officer can only maintain an efficient direct control over a certain limited number of units directly subordinate to himself.

If there are too many, he cannot continually keep them all in mind or make the best use of them. On the other hand, if there are too few, he cannot dispose of them for the different purposes of flank and advance movements, reinforcements, and reserves without recourse to a subdivision of the units, which would break up their internal organization. It is also considered that a commander with only two or three subordinates is too liable to let himself be influenced by their opinions, and therefore to lose in quickness of decision and steadfastness of purpose. The outside limits fixed by continental writers are that each military unit should be broken up into not less than three and not more than eight subordinate units, the best subdivision being into four or five. Up to a certain stage these subdivisions are fixed. The number of companies in a battalion, of divisions in an army corps, is constant. Now that the traditions of the rigid linear formations of eighteenth-century warfare, which required each unit to cover a precisely equal front, are gradually being abandoned, that constant composition is no longer absolutely necessary. But in an army which knows exactly what number of men it can put in the field, and has them all recruited and trained alike, that uniformity has considerable advantages. At a certain stage, however, this fixity of composition must stop. The first main subdivisions into which the armed forces of a nation are broken up in war can have no fixed size. They must vary according to the part they have to play in the plan of campaign, according to the capacity of their line of communications or the strength of the enemy opposed to them. They are frequently modified in the course of the campaign. Napoleon continually altered the composition of his *corps d'armée*. Wellington

did the same. The organization into three 'armies,' with which the Germans invaded France in 1870, was recast by Moltke with each successive phase of the campaign. Both at Bloemfontein and at Pretoria Lord Roberts entirely reconstituted his units for the next stage in his great marches. Without this elasticity in the composition of the first units strategy would be impossible. The highest fixed unit must therefore be so small, relatively, that the size of the main units can be freely modified to suit every change in the strategical situation, without ever involving the breaking in two of any fixed unit. On the other hand, for reasons already given, it should be so large that the variable main units should not, except on very rare occasions, contain more than eight of the fixed units. A Power like Germany, which, in the event of war, would take the field with four or five 'armies,' with a varying strength of from 150,000 to 300,000 men apiece, finds that the highest fixed unit it can conveniently employ is the army corps of nearly 40,000 men. The essential thing, then, to keep in mind about the continental army corps is that they are small, handy units, which can be transferred freely from one command to another, and which need never be broken up. No country has any business to indulge in an army corps organization for field purposes which is not prepared to take the field with at the very least a dozen army corps.*

* An exception may be made in the case of those smaller European States which in the event of war would most probably take the field in alliance with some greater Power, to whose organization they may therefore wish to conform. That consideration can hardly have weighed with our War Office, though it would be difficult to assign limits to its aberrations.

But an army is also subdivided for administrative purposes in times of peace. If that subdivision can be made to correspond with the subdivision of the units in the field, there is a considerable advantage, and in all armies the smaller field units are also administrative units in peace. But in the higher units the subdivision has to be decided by considerations affecting the recruiting, training, and mobilization of the troops, and the geographical distribution of the territories to be defended or invaded, and, in certain cases, the administrative units which these considerations render desirable will not coincide with any one of the units employed in the field. In a country like France or Germany the problem is very simple. Its territory forms a single continuous block. The population is fairly evenly distributed, and, in consequence of universal service, the army can be equally evenly apportioned. Nothing, then, is easier than to parcel out such a country into any number of administrative areas that convenience may dictate. And it is a decided convenience that the troops raised and trained in the administrative areas should coincide with the highest fixed units in the field. And so the armies of France or Germany are administered by army corps in peace, just as they are subdivided into army corps in the field. But it is always essential to remember the three factors which render this coincidence of the tactical with the administrative unit possible: a compact territory, universal service, and an army so large that an army corps is a comparatively small unit.

Now let us take our own case. What is the largest force with which we are ever likely to operate along a single line of advance? In the South African War the largest units of that kind were Lord Roberts's main army

in the march to Pretoria and Sir R. Buller's army in Natal, the one a little larger, the other a little less, than one army corps.* On the Indian frontier we may yet have to put 300,000 men in the field, but these would of a certainty be broken up into three or four main columns, none of them equal to three army corps. And yet, to justify our army corps organization, the smallest of our main subdivisions in the field should contain at least three army corps. The absurdity of an army corps system for the British Army is at once patent. It becomes still more patent if we consider what would happen in real war. We are supposed to have three army corps ready to go abroad at short notice, and we have been assured that their chief advantage is that the officers commanding them in peace will command them in the field, and that there will be no general breaking up and recasting of units as there was in South Africa. The first thing that will happen—due to our mistake of not keeping our very best Generals in reserve—will be that one of the army corps commanders will be appointed to command the whole force, and that that particular army corps will be commanded by a newcomer—unless, indeed, we choose to disorganize the War Office instead of the army corps. Let us first assume that this force of three army corps (one already disorganized) is going to carry on a campaign somewhere by itself. Is there any military situation so simple that it will allow this army to move in one main body or in three equal bodies? No; the very first thing the General in command will have to do will be to cast the pro-

* 'The army corps organization was not tested in the South African War; it was not applicable.'—16,927: GENERAL KELLY-KENNY.

crustean division into three to the winds, and reorganize his army in accordance with the strategical necessities of the situation. But, as a matter of fact, the three army corps are not likely to act alone. They will be sent to India, say, to work together with an army organized in divisions, and composed of troops of different races. The first thing that will happen is that they will be broken up: some put on lines of communication, others duly mixed up with native troops, and then sent to the front. Again, if, as in South Africa, the war proves more serious than was first imagined, reinforcements will follow, surplus Regulars from England, Militia, Volunteers, Colonial contingents. These will be sent, not by the army corps, but by the battalion or the brigade, and the attempt to fit them in with the army corps will be yet another cause of confusion. Lastly, our troops have to be transported by sea before they fight, and convenience of transport and disembarkation will prevent so large a body as an army corps sailing together and being disembarked simultaneously at a single port.

In other words, we want for fighting purposes a very much smaller unit, about a division of all arms.* This could, as a rule, be kept together both on the voyage and at the front. To meet the case of incorporating local native forces or colonial contingents, it might be further an advantage if the number of brigades in such a division, and even the battalions in a brigade, were

* 'The army corps system is a mistake. The largest units that we ever want are divisions. There never has been an army corps together anywhere except on paper.'—1,558-1,559: Sir J. Ardagh.

'In future, I think, a division, with increased number of mounted men and guns, is a large enough command for our Army. An army corps is too cumbersome for one man to deal with.'—16,974: Major-General Sir H. Colvile.

allowed to vary in number—say, from three to five battalions in a brigade, and from two to four brigades in a division. For, while the addition of an extra subordinate unit gives comparatively little trouble to a general and his staff, the creation of a new composite force and a new staff are an inevitable source of confusion and disaster. The subdivisions of the divisional unit might also be modifiable as regards their composition, according to the kind of warfare required. For a country like South Africa a suitable divisional unit might be composed of one brigade of infantry, two of mounted infantry, and one of cavalry. In enclosed country the proportion might very well be three brigades of infantry to one of mounted troops or cyclists. To sum up, our highest field unit must be small and very elastic, and the present army corps are neither.

But if the army corps organization is unsuited to our needs in the field, it is still less suited to our administrative arrangements in peace. Our forces are composed of troops of every kind, recruited on a variety of different systems, and of every degree of training. A certain number of them have to be continually moved about even in peace. On the other hand, owing to the way in which our Empire is broken up into detached portions, a certain number have to be left behind in war in each part to look after local defence. In Germany every single trained man is marched to the frontier at the outbreak of war. The central army corps districts are denuded of troops; but they are perfectly secure, for no invader can touch them till the armies at the frontier are beaten. There is not a single portion of our Empire that can be altogether denuded of troops in any war. As a matter of fact, local feeling in England, in India,

and in the Colonies will always insist on keeping back more troops for local defence than are really required. And, lastly, under our voluntary system the bulk of the armed men in the Empire are under no obligation to serve outside their own area, unless they personally volunteer to do so. And yet for great national emergencies we shall have to rely largely upon their volunteering.

All these considerations are ignored in the scheme of 1901. It divides the United Kingdom into six army corps districts, which on paper may appear more or less to follow the German model. But, in the first place, these army corps do not include all the forces in their area. The first three include no auxiliaries, and the others only a portion of the auxiliary forces. The rest of the auxiliary forces have no proper organization and no proper staff. When the first three army corps go abroad, the most vulnerable portions of the United Kingdom are left without any proper organization for local defence. To make them secure the northern army corps would have to be moved into them. In other words, the system is not a real territorial system such as we want for local defence, but only pretends to be one. Again, what guarantee have we that the demands of the next great war oversea will stop short at exactly three army corps? And, if not, we shall promptly proceed to take the Regulars out of the three home defence corps, and then home defence will be left in exactly the same chaos in which it was during the South African War.

The real solution of the problem is to be found in the mapping out of the Empire into administrative commands, based, not on an arbitrary tactical unit, but on

its main political and geographical divisions. The duty of the staff of such an administrative command in peace would be to raise and train all forces of whatever kind within the area of the command, organizing them in complete divisional units, each composed of homogeneous troops. A command in England, for instance, might contain, say, a division of Regulars, a division or two of Militia and Yeomanry, and three or four of Volunteers. In war their duty would be to despatch complete units to the front and to provide for local defence. In the case where the theatre of operations would be in the command or adjoining it, those duties would, of course, coincide, and the whole of the forces in the command, supplemented perhaps by complete units from other commands, would take the field as a single army. This is practically the organization that obtains at this moment in India.* Such a system would be thoroughly

* 'The plan of mobilization in India is based on mobilization by divisions. We have, as I explained, the great commands, and we draw the divisions for mobilization for the field army from those commands. We gave up mobilization by army corps because it was not suited to the requirements of the Army in operations which we might be called upon to engage in in India. A division comprises three infantry brigades of four battalions each, divisional troops, a cavalry brigade, field hospitals, veterinary hospitals, ammunition columns, ordnance field park, field telegraphs, survey party, and engineer field park, so that it really forms a small and compact unit of about 15,000.'—21,054: MAJOR-GENERAL SIR E. COLLEN, Military Member of Council in India.

'In India, where we have the command system, Army Headquarters never interfere. The Lieutenant-Generals holding these commands, equivalent to a large army corps, carry out the movements, not only within their own commands, but between commands, without any reference to the Quartermaster-General or the Commander-in-Chief.'—18,222: SIR W. NICHOLSON.

elastic. The number of divisions in a command would vary in accordance with strategical considerations. Thus, at the distant approach of a crisis a division of Regulars might be transferred from one of the home commands to South Africa or the Punjab. The remaining Regular and Militia divisions might be despatched on the outbreak of war. If still more troops were wanted and the command of the sea were secured, divisions of Volunteers might follow.

The command staffs would have to work out a series of alternative plans for their operations, whether of offence or defence, according to the reinforcements they might receive or have to send away. But that would be no serious disadvantage, but rather an exercise of their wits. The great advantage, on the other hand, would be that the staff organizations would be constant. Each staff would be devoted to the preparation for war within its territory or on its own frontiers, and we should avoid the ludicrous chaos which marked the period immediately antecedent and subsequent to the outbreak of the South African War, when with each successive reinforcement the command of the forces in South Africa was taken over by an entirely new and inexperienced staff. Under the proposed system the reinforcements would come under the local command, and not supersede it. Again, under the existing system not only have we no organizing staffs near the scene of possible wars—except always in India—but when war breaks out we hurriedly send off to the part the very men whose task has hitherto been the organization at home, so that local defence and the raising and training of fresh troops have to be improvised amidst appalling confusion. Under the proposed system every command staff would,

in war, be kept occupied to the fullest extent with tasks which it has already been carrying out or preparing for in peace: those at the scene of war in conducting operations, those away from it in sending reinforcements, raising fresh troops, and looking after local defence. In fact, the scheme here suggested of territorial commands, and of divisions freely transferable from one command to another, is the only one which, under the conditions of our Empire, will enable us to go to war without a general breaking-up of existing peace staffs and improvisation of new ones.

But to return to Mr. Brodrick's six army corps in England. Apart from all the defects of their organization, and even if they could be made to exist in reality as well as on paper, they are not wanted in this country. For foreign wars they are in a bad strategical position; for home defence the work they can do would be more efficiently performed for half the money by the auxiliary forces. But, leaving every question of that sort out of consideration, and supposing that we really do want six army corps, mainly composed of Regulars, in England, and that we are blessed with perpetual peace abroad, so that we may be saved from the necessity of making use of them and thus interfering with their delicate organization, will it from the recruiting standpoint alone be possible to keep them up? One of the worst evils of the state of affairs before the war was that the Army required far more recruits than would ever be attracted by the rate of pay offered. Mr. Brodrick's scheme means a still further addition to the number of recruits required; and, though he has decided on a considerable increase in the soldiers' pay—a measure to be welcomed in every respect if its object were to improve the class of

men enlisted, and not simply to shore up an unworkable system whose defects have been growing more and more patent from year to year—it is doubtful whether even now he will get enough men, or, at any rate, enough men of a quality fit to be used for active soldiering.

Apparently, then, the prospect to which we are to resign ourselves is to a Budget of something like 30 millions to keep up a large standing army in England, composed mainly of undersized, underfed boys drawn from the lowest classes, whom by diligent gymnastic training and good feeding we may hope to develop so far that at any moment some 60 per cent. of them may be available for soldiering. We must also presumably resign ourselves to the old situation of being unable to take any steps to ward off a threatening danger from a powerful enemy, or even to send a small expedition against an insignificant one, without upsetting the whole country and endangering critical diplomatic relations by calling out our Reserves.

While not venturing to interfere with the Cardwellian theory of the equality between the home and foreign establishment, Mr. Brodrick introduced one modification to which it is worth while paying some attention. The creation of the Royal Garrison Regiment, a step taken under the stress of the war, which required every available battalion in South Africa, is a measure containing in it great possibilities of development. Many of our garrisons, especially coaling-stations such as Malta and Gibraltar, are so confined that the proper training of troops in them is out of the question. They are therefore very undesirable places to which to send soldiers who are still required for active work in the field. On the other hand, as their defence will be mainly passive,

and will require no extraordinary exertion in the way of long marches or attacks in force, it can be carried out quite as well by rather older men. These are the direct advantages.

The indirect ones are no less. In the first place, the separating off of a purely garrison force from the rest of the Army will help to dispel that vicious and unmilitary strategical doctrine that the purpose of our Army abroad is to 'garrison' certain possessions. That doctrine is of the same class as the now well-exploded doctrine that in order to guard our coasts the Navy must never lose sight of them. Just as the aim of the Navy must be to seek out and destroy any hostile fleet wherever it may be, so the aim of our Army abroad must be to crush in the field any force that it is called upon to fight, whether it be composed of rebellious subjects or external foes. Our foreign Army must be, in the main, a field Army, and not a collection of garrisons. The second indirect advantage of the Royal Garrison Regiment is that it offers an opening for a considerable number of old soldiers who are either anxious to stick to soldiering or unable to find a career elsewhere. Given an increase of the regiment to 15,000 or 20,000 men, and at the same time a considerable reduction in the total establishment of Regulars kept up, the opening will become large enough, proportionately, to prove a great inducement to recruiting. The establishment of the Royal Garrison Regiment may be regarded, in its conception at least, as one of the soundest measures which Mr. Brodrick inaugurated.

There has, however, been a certain mistake in the way in which that conception has so far been actually carried out—a mistake which is bound to prejudice considerably both the military efficiency and the ad-

ministrative cost of these battalions, and also to diminish seriously the good effect they might otherwise have upon recruiting. That mistake lies in insisting that the soldier should have completed his term with the Reserve before being allowed to join the Royal Garrison Regiment. That means that the man who wishes to continue the career of a soldier must take temporary work, which, if he is any use, he is not likely to give up after an interval of five years, and that, in consequence, the men who will be secured will mainly be those who have proved failures in civil life. Soldiers who wish to join the Royal Garrison Regiment should be allowed to do so directly they enter the Reserve after their period of foreign service, or else to serve on with their regiments till they are so allowed. The diminution of the Reserve which this would entail would not really be serious, and would be far more than compensated by the beneficial effect upon recruiting. Again, it is an essential feature of the system of garrison regiments that the married establishment in them should be considerable. Under the present extemporized arrangement, most of the men were already married and had large families, often in very poor circumstances, when they enlisted, and the separation from their families, rendered necessary at the moment owing to the lack of accommodation at the principal garrisons, has by no means led to good results. The number of wives and children would be considerably less if the men only married, as a rule, after joining the regiment—which would be the case if they joined the regiment immediately on expiration of their colour service—and they would probably, on the whole, be of a better class, and their children would provide a good stamp of recruit for the Army.

A further development in the same direction is indicated by the recent decision to transfer some of the battalions of the Garrison Regiment to South Africa, not in order to garrison the coast ports, but to settle down in the interior of the new colonies as a sort of Imperial Reserve. This is an excellent principle, and capable of the very widest application in every part of the Empire; but it is perhaps worth considering whether these regiments should not be separated from the Royal Garrison Regiment and constituted into an Imperial Reserve Regiment. Admission into this regiment might be given by preference to old cavalry or mounted infantry or horse artillery soldiers, while the ordinary infantryman or field artilleryman would be better suited in a stationary garrison.

The recruiting problem has been directly approached by Mr. Brodrick on three different lines, all of them sound ones in themselves, the chief error being the attempt to use them to bolster up an impossible system which demands far more recruits than even the new conditions will secure. In the first place, he introduced a substantial increase of pay. That this increase will certainly be an inducement there can be no doubt, though whether, under the present conditions, it will bring in the class of men that are wanted is still somewhat open to question.* The almost more important question of raising the pay of the non-commissioned officer has not yet been dealt with, but ought naturally to follow.

* 'We want a higher class of men, and I am perfectly sure that what we are holding out to them now will not produce that class. We will get more of the same class.'—4,546: General Kelly-Kenny.

In offering the soldier the alternative of enlisting only for three years and then going into the Reserve, Mr. Brodrick initiated a policy which ought not only to increase the Reserve, but greatly to improve the conditions of recruiting. There can be no doubt that, from the recruiting point of view, the worst feature of the old system was the period of service, which was too short to offer the soldier a career, and too long to enable him to start on equal terms with others in other walks of life. By the new method the recruit who only wishes to soldier for a time will be able to start civilian life early enough not to be handicapped as compared with others, while the proportion of openings in the non-commissioned ranks, and of appointments afterwards for those who continue serving for the longer period, will be increased sufficiently to make the service more attractive.

At the same time, as in the case of more than one of Mr. Brodrick's reforms, the sound underlying idea might perhaps with advantage have been somewhat differently applied. Instead of compelling every soldier to join for three years only, with the option of re-enlistment at the end, it would have been simpler to have kept the old term of service, but to have announced that any efficient soldier could, in his third year of service, give six months' notice of his desire to join the Reserve. The necessity of taking the initiative would thus have been on the men who wished to leave rather than on those who wished to stay, and the transition to the system of two periods of service would have been more gradual. As it is, the new system has been rather a leap in the dark, and till it has come into working operation it will be a source of considerable anxiety to the authorities. The ordinary soldier does not like to pledge himself beforehand to any

definite statement of his intentions, and at the present moment there is very little evidence available as to how many men will continue to serve on after the first three years. And in any case, unless the War Office takes steps to provide a sufficient proportion of openings for the longer service soldier at the end of his colour service, and so to give the longer service the attractiveness of a career, it may before long find itself in the awkward predicament of having no drafts available for India.

Side by side with the low pay and disadvantageous conditions of the old service, the discomforts and unpleasantnesses of the soldier's life have been another great deterrent to recruiting. No one has been more zealous in the past to improve the soldier's position and comfort than Lord Roberts, the present Commander-in-Chief, and a good deal has already been done in that direction in the last year or two. The new barracks that are being built are in every respect an enormous improvement on the old ones. The system of cubicles gives the soldiers greater privacy; the arrangements for meals are made with a little more regard to the amenity of life; the sanitary arrangements are less primitive; the bathrooms, though even now hardly adequate, have been very largely increased; the married quarters are being built somewhat more like the dwelling-places of respectable families and less like gaols. The permission to wear plain clothes when on leave and to smoke in the streets in uniform, and other little concessions of that sort, are no doubt appreciated. The number of sentries and guards has been somewhat reduced—a step in the right direction, though considered of doubtful advantage by some as doing away with a useful means of inculcating discipline. Much more doubtful, certainly,

is the policy which was temporarily introduced in some stations of indiscriminately allowing young soldiers to stay out all night. This can hardly be regarded as tending to promote discipline or as an inducement to respectable and sober living, and, though naturally not unpopular with the soldiers themselves, will not tend to make soldiering more popular in the country, or to inspire parents with any desire that their sons should enter the Army.

There, indeed, comes in what is really the most serious of all the obstacles to recruiting—the rooted dislike of the more respectable poorer classes for soldiering, a dislike based partly, no doubt, on the unsatisfactory prospects of the soldier's life hitherto, but also due largely to mere ignorant prejudice. To remove that prejudice, and to inculcate a military spirit in the nation, which will induce boys to enlist from a natural preference for the soldier's life rather than from the mere lack of work, from hunger, or cold, which are at present the chief confederates of the recruiting sergeant, is really the first task for anyone who would set our voluntary system on a firm and permanent basis. In other words, if we wish to avoid conscription on the continental plan, and to keep up an army for foreign service by voluntary enlistment, we must instil, compulsorily if necessary, something of the military spirit and of the rudiments of military training into the youth of the country. In that direction the Government have as yet taken no steps. On the contrary, the War Office has always looked with considerable suspicion on any proposals made by educational institutions for the grant of facilities or of financial aid to cadet corps, rifle clubs, or any such organizations, mainly because they could

not see the immediate return in military strength for the money expended.

As regards the training of our Army, one may readily acknowledge that the experiences of the war have not been altogether neglected. No one foresaw more clearly beforehand or realized more quickly and completely from experience the lessons of modern warfare than Lord Roberts. The new drill-books, embodying his ideas, worked out by Colonel Henderson, one of the ablest students of the art of war in this generation, whose early death has been an almost irreparable loss to the British Army, bear on almost every page the stamp of our recent experience, and may fairly claim to be in advance of anything taught on the Continent. The importance of shooting, especially of rapid shooting at close ranges, at natural targets, and in natural firing positions, is also thoroughly recognised by the authorities. The equipment and training of the cavalry are being brought into harmony with the lessons of the war. Scouting, skirmishing, the importance of a quick eye for ground, are all being taught more seriously and adequately than before. The recent manœuvres showed a great advance in the tactical handling of the troops and in the skill of the men upon anything that could have been witnessed four years ago, though it must not be forgotten that the presence of a large proportion of officers and men with South African experience had probably as much to do with it as the actual improvement in the system of training.

Unfortunately, a recognition of the lessons of the war in drill-books and Army orders, and the presence of veterans, are not sufficient in themselves unless they are accompanied by the granting of the facilities necessary to

make a proper training possible. Training for modern conditions, with their long ranges and extended formations, requires a far larger area of ground than was thought necessary before. Our training-grounds were quite inadequate before the war; they are ludicrously so to-day. The ground at Aldershot is big enough for the training of a few battalions; it is absurd as a training-ground for an army corps, or even a division. Salisbury Plain, when first bought, was not a bad training-ground for a small force; it has now been so completely covered with barracks and rifle and artillery ranges that it is of very little use for any force whatever. At smaller stations the training-grounds, usually about the size of a small golf-links, are generally also used for the rifle-range, and are consequently only available occasionally. It is useless to try and train soldiers with these facilities. One might as well try to train a polo team in a London back garden. Small sums were given last year to commanding officers to hire ground for field training. That is a step in the right direction, but the sums were quite inadequate for the purpose.*

A good deal could be done by a thorough-going Manœuvres Act. The Act of 1897, which, for the sake of the pheasant, excludes all coppices, covers, and woods from the sphere of manœuvres, and which forbids the digging up of the ground for entrenchments, is destructive of all realism in the operations, and its amendment is urgently required. But, even so, the fact remains that land in England is so valuable and so completely taken up for agricultural or other purposes that to train Regular troops properly in England would cost enormous sums of money. The Government,

* See Appendix E.

instead of recognising this fact and removing our troops to regions where land for training is abundant and cheap, or else spending money freely on the acquisition or hire of adequate training-grounds at home, have preferred simply to shut their eyes to the question, and would sooner have an untrained army at a vast expense than incur the extra expenditure for the rearrangement of their forces which would be required in order to train them.

But not only have our troops no ground on which to be trained, but they have no time for training. Under the existing system, everything that is connected with the maintenance and upkeep of the barracks and of the regimental life generally is supposed to be done by the soldiers themselves. The result is that in an ordinary garrison town an enormous proportion of soldiers are always employed on a number of miscellaneous clerical and 'fatigue' duties. All this work could be much better and more efficiently done either by Reservists or by civilians from outside; but in that case it would have to be paid for, and the men who did it would not appear on the statement of effective soldiers which the Secretary of State annually makes to Parliament.*

Here again the efficiency of the Army is sacrificed to the system of sham, whose main object is to produce as large an army on paper as possible, regardless of its military value. The absence of ground to train on and of men to train, is no less harmful to officers than to men.† Training men for modern war on a ground the size of a large cricket-field is pure make-believe, and make-believe is destructive of all professional keenness. It is no use to scold the British Army officer, and say

* See Appendix F. † See Appendix E.

that he is not as keen or as practical as his colleague of the Navy. What would become of keenness in the Navy if the British battle-fleet, in order to economize coal, were never allowed to go out of harbour, while half the sailors were continually kept away doing odd jobs on shore? Success in modern war will depend almost entirely on efficient training, and, if it is worth while keeping up an army at all, it is worth while training it properly, even if doing so necessitates a reduction of the nominal strength. That is an essential point which the present Government are still far from realizing as clearly as might be wished.

On the general training and education of officers a Commission was appointed some time ago, and a very valuable report issued last autumn. The real gist of that report was that there must be some adequate inducement to encourage officers to improve themselves, and, what is equally important, to encourage the most capable and most ambitious men in the Army to compete for the position of instructors. That inducement may be partly financial, but by far the most effective instrument to produce professional keenness is promotion. The organization of a separate education branch at the War Office and the introduction of a system of selective promotion may be taken as genuine attempts on Mr. Brodrick's part to grapple with these all-important questions. It is to be regretted, however, that the Educational Commission did not include within its scope the very important subject of the education of non-commissioned officers, for which at present no provision at all is made, or for the education of the soldier. With the ever-increasing dispersion of the firing-line, the function of the non-commissioned officer

will become more and more important. A training-college for non-commissioned officers is one of the most urgent needs of the Army. Even in the private soldier intelligence has become a factor of the very first importance. If only the same amount of energy were put into the development of the stunted and neglected brains of our recruits as is put into the development of their chests and forearms, the result would be an incalculable increase in the fighting value of our forces.

One branch of the Army, indeed, has probably benefited more from Mr. Brodrick's exertions on its behalf than from those of any War Minister in the past. I refer to the Royal Army Medical Corps, the conditions of whose service have been enormously improved. There is every hope that if the policy initiated by Mr. Brodrick is carried on and expanded, the Army Medical Corps will succeed in attracting, as it has not done hitherto, a sufficient supply of able and ambitious medical students, and that it will provide them with opportunities for keeping abreast with the advance of medical science instead of relapsing into the intellectual apathy begotten of an endless round of the routine treatment of the ordinary barrack complaints. And while on this subject it is necessary to refer to one measure of reform which still awaits a Secretary of State with the courage and sound sense to carry it into execution, and that is some measure to put an end to the terrible ravages of preventable contagious disease in our Army. Those indispensable precautions to secure the soldier's health which were abolished in 1883 in England, and in 1888 in India, in deference to the clamour of a fanatical section with whom the Government of the day was afraid to quarrel, must be restored

in order to put an end to a state of things which is not only a source of weakness to our Army, but a spreading plague spot in the body of the nation.

At the Headquarters of the Army chaos has reigned supreme for years, and the state of affairs since the war seems to have grown steadily worse instead of better.* The evidence given on this subject before the Royal Commission reveals a condition of things the continuance of which is a grave national danger. It is not as if the subject had not been inquired into before. A perfectly definite remedy for the evils from which the War Office suffers was put forward by the Hartington Commission in 1891 and disregarded. The War Office was once again made the subject of a searching inquiry soon after Mr. Brodrick entered the War Office by a committee of eminent practical men under the chairmanship of Sir Clinton Dawkins. Though hampered by the narrowness of its reference, the committee condemned the existing War Office system in the most unqualified terms. It made a number of recommendations, of which up to the present only the least valuable one—namely, the substitution of soldiers for civilian clerks in the War Office—has been really effectively carried out, and it has been carried out in a manner so hasty as to cause the most serious confusion.† And now another Royal Commission

* 'When I came back to the War Office, having been away in South Africa since 1899, nothing struck me more than the congestion of the work, and the number of things that have to go up to the Secretary of State that formerly did not.'—4,710: GENERAL KELLY-KENNY.

† 'We could never have carried out the arrangements for the war if we had had the military clerks we have now.'—'Because they have not sufficient intelligence or training?'—'Yes, neither, as a rule.'—2,892-2,893: LIEUTENANT-COLONEL J. S. COWANS.

has investigated the matter, and once more a definite scheme—in all essentials the same as that of the Hartington Commission — has been urged by the strongest members of the Commission. Will the new Secretary of State have the courage or the power to put the scheme into execution?

One very important step towards the reform of our Headquarters organization was indeed taken by Mr. Brodrick when the Mobilization and Intelligence Departments were united and put under the control of Sir William Nicholson, one of the most capable men in the British Army. In this new department the sanguine spectator may perhaps see the germ and nucleus of that General Staff which was declared to be an absolute necessity for the British Army by the Hartington Commission thirteen years ago. Even more important in some ways has been the reorganization of the Imperial Council of Defence. But however useful that Council may be in securing the consideration of Imperial strategy as a whole, its deliberations will be of little value unless they are based on sufficient information. Only an adequately equipped General Staff can supply the information, and, as far as can be judged from the actions of the Government, they have hitherto shown not the slightest intention of trying to create an adequate General Staff and a Staff system. The fact is that a real General Staff, with an Intelligence and Mobilization Department adequate to the various needs of the British Empire, would cost a certain amount of money, possibly half a million a year. But a nation that goes on automatically piling up million after million on to its Army Budget to increase the gross bulk of the Army, without considering for what purposes that money is wanted,

naturally has no money to spare for making that Army effective. There lies the point of the whole question of Army reform to-day.

The object of this chapter has not been to find fault with Mr. Brodrick's measures. Many of them have undoubtedly been excellent in themselves, and all have been inspired by an honest and sincere desire to improve the Army. More has been done for the Army in Mr. Brodrick's three years than during the tenure of office of any Secretary of State since Mr. Cardwell. But at a time like the present we cannot afford to be satisfied with improvement on a system that is no longer suited to our needs. We want someone who is ready to go to the root of the matter, and to ask himself freely and frankly what are the purposes for which we want a Regular Army, and how we can best meet those requirements within the limits of reasonable expenditure. We have come to a parting of the ways. Are we going, on the present system, to continue indefinitely piling up an Army of inefficients, and, like the frog in the fable, to endeavour, on paper at least, to swell ourselves to the bulk of the military cattle of the Continent? Or can we remodel our present system and create for ourselves a Regular Army—small indeed, but effectively trained, effectively organized, and effectively posted for all probable eventualities?

CHAPTER III

SOUTH AFRICA AND THE HOME ESTABLISHMENT

THE general outlines of our military requirements and the extent to which the changes introduced during the tenure of office of the late Secretary of State for War have contributed, or failed to contribute, towards a satisfactory solution of the Army problem have been the subject of the preceding chapters. In the following ones the attempt will be made to suggest some of the main features of a workable system of Imperial military defence. The most immediate question from the strategic point of view is, as has been indicated already, the question of distribution. Where must our Army be placed so that it can most efficiently and economically secure the defence of our territories and of our political interests? What organization must be devised in order that the troops may be maintained in good health and in military efficiency in those parts of the world where we require them?

Reference has already been made to Lord Cardwell's organization of the Army into linked battalions, which is the basis of the distribution of the Army under the existing system. Applied as that system was—namely, to keeping half of the Regular Army and the whole of the Reserves in these islands—it has long become a

glaring anachronism. At the present day the retention in England of a Regular Army equal in size to that which we maintain abroad is strategically absurd and financially ruinous.

At the same time, it must not be supposed that the system, as planned by its originator, was wholly bad. In the days before Lord Cardwell's reforms the Army was composed of a number of single battalions of long-service soldiers. These battalions were moved about the Empire as the military necessities of the occasion suggested, and in that respect the old system was, strategically, considerably superior to the one which Lord Cardwell introduced. But it was only long service that made the old system possible. A certain number of rather young recruits were no doubt at times sent out to battalions abroad, but, on the whole, those battalions were composed of men of sufficient age to withstand the effects of a tropical climate. The introduction of short service would have flooded the battalions abroad with boys, or would have involved an enormous increase of the depots, where the recruits would have had to be kept two or three years on an average before they were sent out. But the training given at a depot was considered to be so inferior to the training the young soldier would get with a real fighting unit that it was thought better to let him, instead of staying on at the depot, enter some battalion at home and be drafted to a battalion abroad two or three years later as a fully-trained as well as a full-grown soldier. If it had been thought possible, or desirable, to do this drafting of matured soldiers from battalions at home to battalions abroad indiscriminately —that is to say, from any one battalion at home to any other battalion abroad, as the battalions required men—

there would have been no need for that complete reorganization which was introduced.

But it was felt that such a proceeding would be entirely destructive of the regimental character of the British Army, a character on which it has always prided itself. In order to preserve the moral value of regimental traditions as far as possible, the step was taken of linking up battalions in pairs, so that the draft from one particular battalion at home should always go to a certain other battalion abroad. The arrangement caused much soreness in the Army at the time, but any other would have caused almost more, and the hope of those who devised it that the two battalion regiments would gradually come to consider themselves as units, has, on the whole, been justified by the result. Since the South African War, certainly, the new territorial names have almost completely asserted their supremacy over the historical numbers, and the value of the local connection in stimulating the keenness of Militia and Volunteers, and in awakening local interest and sympathy in the doings of the troops, was abundantly made manifest at every stage of the campaign.* In this, as in many other respects, the war justified Lord Cardwell against many of the most vehement criticisms directed against the revolutionary character of his

* 'Does the territorial system lead to *esprit de corps?*'—'Enormously. I had the Manchester Regiment under my command and the Staffordshire Regiment, and the people of Manchester and Staffordshire took an interest in everything connected with their battalions. With the men of the battalions their one idea was to go back to the county from which they came proud of themselves and their regiment. I think the territorial system has had a very good effect. That is my experience of it.'—17,878: MAJOR-GENERAL SIR H. M. L. RUNDLE.

reforms.' A linking up of battalions into groups of four would undoubtedly in some ways have proved more serviceable and adapted itself with greater elasticity to the changing conditions of our policy. But the opposition to it at the time would have been still greater, and it must be remembered that the whole trend of the military policy of the day, and more especially of the political party to which Lord Cardwell belonged, was to limit our military responsibility as far as possible to the defence of the United Kingdom and the maintenance of our rule in India, a twofold task to which a system of two battalion regiments seemed peculiarly well adapted.

The effects of the linked battalion system upon the home battalions has for years been the subject of unfavourable criticism, and deservedly so. But it is only fair to Lord Cardwell and his coadjutors at the War Office to remember that their original conception of their scheme presupposed that the recruits for the home battalions would be averagely healthy youths over eighteen years of age, so that the home battalions, though composed of young soldiers, would still be efficient fighting units, and that their Reservists would be, in the main, required for the real purposes of a Reserve—that is to say, to bring up the battalions to full war strength and to fill up the gaps in the fighting-line after war had begun, and not simply to displace men already serving with the colours, but unfit to be used for war. The 'squeezed lemon,' the 'special,' and the 'crèche' were not essential features of the British Army at home as they conceived it. The fault no doubt lies partly with them for cutting down the real inducements to soldiering by the introduction of the new term of service. But it lies still more with their successors, who have gone on steadily increasing the

Army, and consequently increasing the demand for recruits, without improving those conditions in any way.

What new method, then, or what adaptation of the existing method, can we devise that will both meet our present strategic requirements, ease the strain upon our finances, and at the same time help to solve the recruiting problem? The first essential, undoubtedly, is to reduce the total numerical strength of our Regular Army. A considerable reduction of the Regular forces, concurrently with the other inducements to recruiting which Mr. Brodrick has during the last two years introduced, ought to go a long way towards solving the recruiting problem. There can be little doubt that if we could bring down our present recruiting requirements to something like 35,000 men a year, the improved conditions of service, especially if rather more is done to provide openings for the time-expired men—and that will, of course, be easier when there are less of them to provide for—ought to secure an ample supply of men of the stamp that are wanted.

A second essential, no less important, is to increase the portion of our Regular forces placed within striking distance of what in a previous article has been described as the military front of the British Empire. Those two conditions, taken together, naturally upset the whole Cardwellian equipoise. They involve the reduction of the Regular force kept in the British Isles from a half to something like a quarter, or even less, of the whole Regular Army. That reduction is justifiable, not only in view of the fact that the main defence of these islands must always be the Navy, but also because the military conditions in highly civilized and in comparatively uncivilized countries are so different that the sort of

army which is most efficient for the latter is likely in the former to be far less efficient than a much cheaper force raised and trained for purely local purposes.

More complicated and technical is the question of how battalions under the new distribution are to be related to each other. Unless we are ready to go to the length of indiscriminate drafting from one battalion to another, the battalions must remain linked up in some definite proportion. One suggestion that has been made to meet this difficulty is that we should repeat the Cardwellian process of linking up regiments once again, and create four-battalion regiments, of which three battalions should always be abroad and one at home; or three-battalion regiments, of which two should be abroad and one at home. There is a great deal to be said for a larger grouping than that afforded by the present single-link system. One of these days it may well become necessary to face the internal friction caused by again throwing names and traditions into the melting-pot. Or, as an alternative which offers very great advantages from the tactical point of view, the present battalions might be broken up into battalions 500 strong containing four companies each. But without a complete alteration in the terms of service and the age at which recruits are enlisted, such a regrouping would not meet the present difficulty, which is that the existing home establishment, though strategically unnecessarily large, is from the drafting point of view chronically insufficient, and likely to become more so.

For if one battalion at home, with the help of a depôt, can only just keep one foreign battalion supplied with drafts at the cost of reducing itself to the state of a 'squeezed lemon,' how much less will one battalion be

able to supply two or three! It may be suggested that the depots could be considerably enlarged. But to meet what would be required of them they would have to be enlarged to the size of battalions, and that would simply mean reintroducing the old parity of battalions over again. At the same time, the home battalion would have to pass almost the whole of its strength out in drafts every year, a very serious obstacle to effective training. This difficulty will be all the greater when, under the new terms of service introduced by Mr. Brodrick, a very considerable proportion of the soldiers in the home battalions insist on passing into the Reserve at the end of their third year without going abroad. Even under the present system of a parity of battalions at home and abroad it is not improbable that the new conditions of service will necessitate the 'home' battalions being kept at a higher establishment than hitherto, a serious thing to contemplate if we are to keep up the Army on its present footing. It is, after all, a simple question of arithmetic. With the present strength of home battalions it is necessary, in order to keep up the battalions abroad, that 75 per cent. of the men should re-enlist at the end of their three years. If experience shows that not more than 50 per cent. will do so, the only remedy (short of again altering the terms of pay and service) will be to raise the strength of the home battalion till 50 per cent. of its annual output of three years' men equals 75 per cent. of the previous output; in other words, to raise it from under 800 to nearly 1,200 men.

A system of multiple linked battalions with a rather longer term of service, in which the first battalion at home should draft to a second battalion in healthy

places like South Africa, or comparatively healthy places like the Mediterranean and some Indian stations, and the second battalion, in turn, to the battalion in India, would not be open to the same objections, but would be costly in transport and clumsy in working. In fact, whatever modifications may ultimately be made in the single-link system, the fact remains that those modifications will not, by themselves, get round the problem of the parity of battalions required by drafting necessities. The solution of that problem must come first, and meanwhile the present system might well be allowed to go on.

How, then, can we adapt the present system to our new strategical needs? A reference to the causes of its adoption will, perhaps, suggest the solution of the difficulty. It was adopted for climatic reasons, because the young soldier could not be sent to India. At that time the only really healthy station for troops that was important enough to come into serious consideration was the United Kingdom, and it was not unnatural then, especially in view of the mistaken fears of invasion which in those days animated our military authorities, to decide to keep the whole of the young-soldier battalions in these islands. But since then other regions of the Empire, no less healthy than England, though considered of little consequence in Lord Cardwell's day, have acquired an increased strategical importance. They have also developed since that day as homes of a large self-governing British population, are in every respect more comparable, as countries for Englishmen to live in, with the Mother-country than they were thirty years ago, and are bound to develop still more rapidly in the near future under the stimulus of preferential trade within the Empire.

Why should not the term 'home' stations be extended to these also? As a matter of fact, even before the war, in order to avoid a breakdown of the system, part of the garrison of Gibraltar, and even of that of Hong-Kong, were temporarily placed on the home establishment. That was a mere makeshift. But why should not that which was used successfully, as far as its immediate object went, as a makeshift, be now taken up as a deliberate policy? Why should not South Africa, and ultimately Canada and Australia, be included in the home section of our Imperial system of defence? It may be a long time before they become of any importance as recruiting centres, and thus become in the fullest sense of the word home stations; but they all offer every climatic advantage for the healthy physical development of young men, and they all provide—at any rate, to a certain extent—that home environment which the English soldier does not find in India or in one of our foreign coaling-stations. In any of the self-governing Colonies the private soldier will, in his spare time, find the amusements and social intercourse of his own home; he will make friends or even find relations among the inhabitants. While still serving he can look round for opportunities of earning a livelihood when the time comes for him to join the Reserve—opportunities, in most cases, more promising than any open to him in England.

At this moment we have a great opportunity for putting this suggestion into practice. As a result of the late war, we have a large and efficient force in South Africa. With a view to the political situation in South Africa—for moral effect, perhaps, rather than in fear of any actual disturbance—it is advisable not to diminish that force for some time to come. But, apart from that,

general considerations of Imperial strategy make it a matter of almost vital consequence that we should keep in South Africa an army large enough to reinforce any other threatened portion of our military front at the shortest possible notice.

Why should we not, then, instead of basing, as Mr. Brodrick did, all our schemes of organization on some problematical future when it may be advisable to reduce the South African force to twelve battalions, frankly accept the situation as it is, include South Africa in the Home Army, and permanently locate the first two divisions of that Home Army in the South African command? We shall at one stroke thereby diminish the Regular Army we have to keep up by twice the equivalent of the forces authorized for South Africa by Mr. Brodrick's scheme, the transfer of the South African force from the foreign to the home establishment affecting the balance of the linked-battalion system just as the transfer of a vote from one side to the other in the House of Commons, counting two on a division, affects the balance of parties. For, taking Mr. Brodrick's scheme, we have 78 battalions at home to balance 78 abroad, including 12 in South Africa, or a total of 156 battalions. Excluding South Africa from the foreign establishment, you have only 66 foreign battalions to provide for. These require a corresponding home establishment of 66 battalions, and however many of these you keep in South Africa, the total number required will still be only 132, or 24 less than Mr. Brodrick's establishment. The relief to our finances and to the recruiting department which will ensue in consequence can hardly be overestimated.

That South Africa is a country to which the young

recruit can be sent with perfect safety is a question about which we need have no anxiety. No one who has been out to the South African War can fail to have been struck by the way in which our young soldiers developed in the healthy and bracing atmosphere of the high veld.* In no other country but South Africa could a campaign such as we have carried on without a single intermission, with troops marching all day and sleeping every night in the open month after month, have been conducted with less than four or five times the casualties from disease. It may be safely asserted that if the South African War had been fought in England under similar conditions the death-rate would have been something appalling. Enteric fever, due to bad sanitation, has, indeed, in the past been prevalent in South African towns such as Bloemfontein and Ladysmith; but, on the whole, there are few countries in the world to which boys of seventeen or eighteen could go with less fear of disease and more hope of rapid physical development than South Africa.

Again, if the War Office is really eager to secure decentralization, as it professes to be, then it can find a far greater opportunity for a really decentralized and self-contained command in South Africa than in England. The difference in local conditions and the length of time required for correspondence by letter are in themselves factors that make against excessive centralization. Moreover, the fact that the command in this case is

* 'South Africa is the climate of all climates for boys or young men.'—16,565: MAJOR-GENERAL SIR R. POLE-CAREW.

'South Africa has such a magnificent climate for men that the material that would be obtained would improve very much on the high veld, and, of course, there is a scope for manœuvres that there is not in this country. I think it would be a very fine school.'—16,572: GENERAL POLE-CAREW.

a real geographical, national, and economic unit, and that the purposes for which the South African forces are likely to be used fall under two or three main heads, make it not only possible, but in the highest degree advisable, that the South African Commander-in-Chief should be entrusted with the very widest measure of control over the executive and financial administration of his army, with the collection of information and the preparation of plans for such wars as may be possible in South Africa, and with the preparation of schemes for rapid mobilization and the concentration of troops at South African ports in readiness for immediate despatch to Egypt, India, or the Far East. Like the German Army Corps commander, the Commander in South Africa could gradually become almost wholly autonomous, being subject to the direct control of the War Office only as regards broad questions of policy, though, of course, like the German commander in the same position, subject to frequent and searching inspection of his financial, administrative, and staff methods.

As a training-ground South Africa offers advantages which hardly any country in the world could pretend to rival. Not only is its climate very healthy, but it is admirably suited for open-air work all the year round. All through the colder half of the year the soldier can sleep in the open without the slightest danger of rain, a fact which enormously facilitates, not only manœuvres on a large scale, but also the moving about under war conditions of the smaller units. The costly postponement of manœuvres, of which we have had recent experience in England, would be unknown in South Africa. On the other hand, unlike India, there is hardly a single day, even in the middle of summer,

on which the heat is unbearably oppressive. An incidental advantage of the position of South Africa in the Southern Hemisphere would be that reinforcements sent to India in the Indian summer or autumn, when the British troops in India are least effective as a result of the fearful summer heat, would arrive in the very best condition. Space is unlimited, and there is almost every gradation of ground, from the endless level plains of the Orange River Colony and Griqualand to the Alpine fastnesses of the Drakensberg, and from the dense, perplexing scrub of the bushveld to the treeless, coverless open of the high veld or still bleaker Karroo.* In such a country the training of the soldier is an absolutely different thing to the disheartening struggle that it is in England.† I would confidently assert that at the end of three years' training cavalry and artillery trained in South Africa would be equal to twice, and infantry one and a half times, the same number of men trained in this country.

There are certain objections, of course, which have been urged against the permanent retention of a large force in South Africa. The first is the objection of expense. Undoubtedly, the general cost of labour and

* 'A very beautiful training-ground; there was every sort and form of ground—cover, and bare land between the cover, and all that could be required.'—16,814: GENERAL GATACRE.

† 'I am sure you would get a very much better fighting machine trained in South Africa than in England.'—13,964: LIEUTENANT-GENERAL SIR IAN HAMILTON.

'The advantage of training and keeping them in South Africa would be enormous.'—14,025: SIR IAN HAMILTON.

'I think the only training-ground for cavalry is in India and in South Africa.'—17,609: GENERAL C. E. KNOX.

'Any man can be trained in a year, I think, in a country like that.'—17,589: GENERAL C. E. KNOX.

of the necessaries of life in South Africa, added to the cost of transportation, will increase the expense of troops kept out there over troops kept in England. There are, however, large items on the other side of the balance which are usually overlooked. To keep the Army efficient in England—that is to say, to provide it with training-ground adequate to secure the proper training of the men, especially of the mounted forces and artillery —would cost enormous sums, to the necessity of providing which our rulers have, so far, ostrich-like, firmly shut their eyes. In Africa training-ground of a character bearing a much closer resemblance to that of the countries in which our Foreign Service Army is likely to fight is both cheap and abundant. If the question is one of efficiently training troops as well as of merely feeding and housing them, it is by no means so certain that South Africa is really the more expensive of the two. And, apart from permanent training-grounds, the cost of manœuvres would be far less than in this country. The only damage troops can do is the breaking of wire fences, and when one comes to consider that the average size of a piece of enclosed ground in South Africa is several thousand acres as against five or ten acres in England, it is evident that the amount of damage in that respect can only come to an insignificant fraction of the damage that would be involved if troops were moved about equally freely in England. This very autumn, while the manœuvres in England cost some £140,000 for a force of 35,000 men, some 16,000 men in the Transvaal and Orange River Colony were carrying on a far more extensive and useful series of operations at a cost of £18,000. That is to say, rather more than double the number of men in England cost

nearly eight times the money; or, to put it more simply, manœuvres in South Africa cost from one-quarter to one-third what they do in England.

Even as regards such a matter as the building of barracks, it must be remembered that though the cost of building in South Africa is greater, the ground on which the buildings are placed is cheap, and the actual buildings themselves need not be of as solid a construction as in the damper and colder climate of England. The sale of existing barracks situated on expensive sites in the centre of some of the large cities of England would probably go some way towards making up for the extra expense in South Africa. Then, again, it is comparatively cheap to buy and to feed horses in South Africa—at any rate if they are kept on the veld, and not fed wholly in the stable. In fact, South Africa is the ideal country for the creation, at a comparatively low cost, of a great military remount and transport centre, of the necessity of which the unfortunate and ruinously costly experiences of the late war ought long ago to have convinced us.

But apart from all this there remains the cardinal fact that the placing of the troops in South Africa on the home establishment would render possible a total reduction of the Regular forces by 24 battalions. Now, even supposing that it cost 50 per cent. more to keep troops in South Africa than in England, the transfer from England to South Africa of 12 battalions, in addition to the establishment already fixed by Mr. Brodrick, would only involve an extra cost equal to the cost of keeping up 6 battalions. Setting this against the saving of reducing 24 battalions, we still get a net saving of the cost of 18 battalions. Reckoning roughly the extra cost

might work out at something between one and one and a half millions, according to the amount of money spent on giving the South African troops a colonial allowance, complete field transport, sufficient horses for mounted infantry training, reasonable manœuvre facilities, etc.; the net saving might be something between two millions and a million, according as the superfluous 24 battalions were actually abolished, or, what would be preferable, reduced to training *cadres*.

It is impossible to fight against this conclusion, or to deny that the transference of a large part of our Home Army to South Africa will not only give us strategical advantages which can hardly be reckoned in money, but also involve an actual, immediate, and easily calculable economy in hard cash.

Nevertheless, it is on this very issue of expense that the proposal set forth in the present work has so far been thwarted. The vigorous advocacy of it in the *Times* and other papers; the strong support of the Army Reform section among the Unionist members in the Commons; the less public, but even more powerful, pressure applied by Mr. Chamberlain and by the Council of Defence, finally succeeded in overcoming the stubborn opposition offered by Mr. Brodrick to this extent, that he consented to keep up the South African establishment at 25,000 men. The South African battalions were to be on a peculiar mixed footing, neither draft-giving nor draft-receiving, a modification upon the scheme here put forward, whose object was partly to have the South African battalions composed of maturer soldiers, but chiefly to avoid giving any excuse for the reduction of the Regular troops in England. The consequence of this desire to save the Army Corps scheme in its entirety

was that, instead of a saving, the proposed arrangement involved an extra expenditure of some £900,000 a year. With £400,000 of this Mr. Brodrick proposed to charge the Indian Government, on the ground that the chief benefit of the change would be enjoyed by India, who could thus secure a considerable reinforcement at a mere fraction of the cost of an actual increase to the strength of the British troops in that country. This scheme was announced in Parliament on July 16. Barely three weeks later it was revoked, because India declared herself unable to afford the contribution. And Mr. Brodrick, with a disregard for the essential unity of Imperial defence which is almost too astounding for comment, openly declared to the world at large that the proposal had been made, 'not for the *needs* of the War Office, but entirely for the *convenience* of India.'*

Another objection that has been urged is that the strategical disadvantages of England are not really so great as they seem on the map, because of the enormous facilities for sea transport which are provided by the centre of the world's shipping. This argument—one of the weightiest that can be urged for the retention of any considerable portion of our Regular troops in the United Kingdom—is, however, as has already been suggested, entirely inapplicable to the contingency which we have most reason to dread—namely, that of a struggle with a naval coalition combined with a simultaneous attack upon our Eastern possessions. For the real difficulty about sending reinforcements from England is not so much the actual distance to our 'military front' as the difficulty and danger of traversing the first 1,500 miles of sea. The difference between the despatch

* See Appendix J.

of troops across a British lake like the Indian Ocean and their despatch from England might well be a matter, not of days, but of months. And of what the delay of even a few weeks may mean in a war with a great Power the South African War has given us the merest foretaste. Thirty thousand men trained in South Africa are anyhow worth fully 60,000 trained in England. But 30,000 trained men in the fighting line at the outbreak of war* may be worth more than 300,000 two months later, when our inadequate hosts have been driven back in confusion, when prestige has been lost, and rebellion, perchance, raises its head. We cannot afford to repeat our South African performance on an Indian scale.

As a matter of fact, the sea transport capacities of South Africa are in themselves very large, and destined to develop enormously in the future. Apart from the regular South African trade with Europe, there is a very considerable shipping between England and New Zealand and Australia which passes round the Cape. The trade between the eastern ports of South Africa—Durban, Delagoa Bay, and Beira—and the East is sure to increase considerably. A subsidy, such as would form but a very small item on the military Budget, would be enough to insure the success of a large shipping trade between Bombay and the South African ports. The drafting of troops to India in peace time will itself either require a certain number of Government transports or provide a considerable stimulus to the shipping trade between India and Africa.

Again, the mining experts all declare that the Transvaal mines will soon require 300,000 to 400,000 labourers.

* 'Another 5,000 or 6,000 men should have made initial success certain in Natal.'—13,941: Sir Ian Hamilton.

Africa south of the Zambesi is not likely to produce more than 100,000. The balance, whether from Central and Eastern Africa or from Asia, will have to come by sea, and will require a large fleet to carry them. Or, to take another item: South Africa is a splendid breeding-ground for horses and mules. With a little encouragement it might become the chief remount depot for India. That, again, means a small fleet of steamers, and —what is even more important in war—steamers equipped with horse-fittings. Why did all the infantry go out to South Africa first and the far more important cavalry last in 1899? Because, with all the wealth of transports available in England, there were no ships ready with horse-fittings. And from the very beginning of the war the all-important transport mules had to be shipped to the front, not from the great English centre of shipping, but from North America, Spain, Italy, and the Argentine. On another occasion we may not be given the leisure to scour the world for mules and horses, while bodies of infantry dumped down helplessly at the front make futile efforts to check a foe completely equipped in all the arms. And when we did get out our horses, why did they perish with such fearful rapidity? Because they had to be used immediately after a three or four weeks' sea voyage, because they were untrained for cavalry work, and because the men had no personal interest in the horses, and were unaccustomed even to that stamp of animal. A large force of mounted infantry crossing the short and calm traverse of the Indian Ocean with its own trained horses, and receiving fresh supplies of remounts from its own remount establishments in South Africa, would be an infinitely more effective body of troops than almost any number of raw

infantry from home. And in any case, even if we leave out of account the South African trade and its developments, there would be no difficulty in a crisis in diverting to South Africa some part of the enormous volume of shipping which passes south-eastwards from the mouth of the Red Sea. From Aden to Delagoa Bay ought not to be more than seven or eight days' steaming. With these facilities there can be little doubt that a division could, even now—quite apart from the command of the sea—be sent to India in half the time, and an army corps in considerably less time, from South Africa than from England.

An objection which at first sight really appears to be very serious is the one that these young-soldier battalions in South Africa will be quite unable to take the field in India till they are completed by their Reservists, and that these can only come from England, so that nothing will be gained except the better training. The answer to this is, firstly, that a certain number of the Reservists will undoubtedly settle down locally, and a very little Government encouragement would greatly increase the number; further, there is no reason why the South African young-soldier battalions should be kept on the lower establishment which has hitherto been fixed for the bulk of the home battalions. They might very well be kept on the higher establishment on which home battalions are kept when on 'short tour' in the Mediterranean, or on an even higher establishment still, so that after dropping out immature and untrained soldiers they might still contain some 700 to 800 men. Together with the Reservists on the spot, and perhaps a company of affiliated Volunteers, a battalion could then go off quite strong enough for active service, and receive

the bulk of its Reservists later to fill up the gaps caused by the campaign. In fact, from the tactical point of view, it is just as well that the company officers should not be overwhelmed with the task of incorporating in their companies and getting in hand an enormous undigested mass of Reservists just when they want all their faculties free for handling them skilfully in action and learning the new lessons that each war brings with it.

Besides, one may reasonably hope that the reduction in the recruiting demand consequent on the policy here advocated, coupled with the increased pay, will raise the standard of quality quite sufficiently to make a marked difference in the proportion of men in any 'home' battalion ready for immediate service. Nor is there any objection to the standard of age and physique for admission to regiments localized in South Africa being made somewhat higher. The inducements of a colonial allowance, facilities for riding and shooting, and opportunities for looking out for civil employment, ought without difficulty to secure the men required. The fact is that the rather prevalent notion that the linked-battalion system renders it impossible for a home battalion to take the field without complete mobilization is based, not on any inherent necessity, but on a hasty deduction from the present condition of the home battalions. There is no reason why the home battalions in South Africa, as well as at least a division in England, should not be kept at such a strength as to be able to take the field at once, while the remaining home battalions should be kept at an even lower establishment than at present. To make such an arrangement work really satisfactorily, it might eventually prove

desirable to have a linking into groups of four, of which two would be abroad on foreign establishment, one in England, South Africa, or Canada, on the high home establishment, and the fourth in England on the lower home establishment.

A further series of objections is to the effect that the change will be highly unpopular in the Army. It is said that the recruit will be unwilling to serve in a battalion that he has not seen marching through the streets of his own native town; that he will be unwilling at short notice to go to a strange country many thousand miles from his home. That South Africa is not a strange country in the sense in which India or Malta or any part of the Continent of Europe are strange countries has already been pointed out. Very possibly certain recruits may be lost by not seeing the battalion march through the streets. But there is a very large class of men, probably above the average level of the class that enlists, who are rather anxious to emigrate, but hesitate at the thought of the expense and the uncertainty of what they may have to face at the other end, many of whom would be eager to enlist in order to be able to see South Africa at Government expense, and form an opinion on its desirability as a home.* Most of these at the end of their three years would enter the Reserve in South Africa, and thus help still further towards localizing the forces there, and enabling them to be made up to war strength and to replenish their losses more rapidly than if their Reservists were all in England. Those, on the other hand, who have found the soldier's life agreeable, or have not discovered any

* 'I do not see why locating an Army Corps in South Africa should interfere with the recruiting.'—19,733: COLONEL MACBEAN.

advantageous prospects for themselves in South Africa, would continue to serve for the longer period, and go on to India. It is possible, too, that, in spite of the high wages prevalent in South Africa, a certain small number of recruits, both among the town population and among the 'bywoner' class of Boers, might be enlisted locally.

From the private soldier's point of view, the most serious objection to South Africa is the expensiveness of beer and other luxuries. A good canteen system, with duty-free importation of goods for the soldiers' use, ought largely to get over that difficulty. Tobacco, at any rate, is cheap. Opportunities for riding, and for shooting and fishing, in localities where such sport is procurable, ought to help to make the life more attractive. And in any case the soldier should receive some small addition to his pay as a colonial allowance. The extra cost of this would be but a small item, a little over £120,000 for an extra rate of threepence a day for a whole army corps. Of course, South Africa has not been very popular with the troops that have had to stay on since the peace, with all the discomforts of war and none of its glories, with no proper accommodation, no colonial allowance, no proper organization of the soldier's amusements, amid a population that is itself mainly occupied with rebuilding burnt farms or restarting ruined industries. But what else could be expected, and what reason is there to suppose that the dissatisfaction expressed by some of the soldiers at present will represent the normal attitude of the troops towards the country?

It may be said that, apart from any objections of expense of living, which can be met by colonial allowances, South Africa and the other Colonies whose

inclusion in the 'home' establishment is here advocated will be unpopular with officers, and that it will be difficult to get officers for regiments whose service is entirely out of England. This objection may be partly met by a four-battalion grouping, which would prevent any one regiment being altogether abroad. But the real answer to this objection is to be found in the presupposition which must underlie any real reform of our Army system based on the complete releasing of the present Regular Army from the task of the home defence of the United Kingdom. That presupposition is that the Militia—I use the term here to include not only the existing Militia, but the whole of our national Home Defence Army, for which we cannot well find a better or more honourable name—shall be really made an effective and properly organized force, one providing ample opportunity for professional ability, and the due reward of that ability in adequate pay and promotion to high command.

When the Militia receives its due recognition as the force responsible for the land defence of the United Kingdom, and is developed into as efficient a body for that special purpose as the Foreign Service Army is for its purposes, then those who wish to take up a military career, but for family or other reasons prefer to spend their lives in England, will devote themselves to the Militia. Those who wish to serve most of their lives abroad—and the keenness of the competition for places in the Indian Army shows there are many of them—will go into regiments that serve entirely out of England, while many will find themselves best suited by occasional exchange from the foreign service into the Home Army. This last step will also be a means by which the foreign

service battalions will still keep touch with the Militia battalions with which they have hitherto been associated.

There is a further advantage in localizing battalions in South Africa, or, indeed, in any of the self-governing Colonies. The benefits that would accrue to the Army from a strengthening of the corps of officers from the vigorous sons of our colonial fellow-citizens are freely admitted, and were specially emphasized in the recent report of the War Office Commission on Military Education. But it is also worth recognising how small are the attractions which the Regular Army at present offers to colonists. Any young colonist who nowadays becomes a British officer is not only cut off from his native country for the rest of his life, except for occasional visits during leave-time, but also enters a society composed entirely of strangers, who, moreover, are not always too tolerant of anything unfamiliar, whether in accent, mannerism, or general view of life. But when a colonist can join a battalion which is permanently stationed in his colony, entering into the society of men whom he has often met before in his parents' house or joined in outdoor sports, with the knowledge that a considerable part of his service, at any rate, will be spent within easy reach of his own home, there can be little doubt that there will be plenty who will avail themselves of any opportunities that may be offered.

It is not difficult to see how great a factor towards welding the Empire together the Imperial Army might thus ultimately become. When one thinks of an Empire like the Austrian, composed of a dozen discordant nationalities, which has been held together for two generations mainly by the community of sentiment

and the loyalty of its corps of officers, one cannot but regret that so little has been done hitherto to use the British Army as a means towards strengthening the sentiment of unity in an Empire where it already exists so strongly. There is too much of a tendency in England, even among professed Imperialists, to take up the line of chiding the Colonies for not contributing towards the cost of the Navy and the Army, which we keep up for their benefit as well as ours. That is a mistaken line. How much we could save if the Colonies were separated from us, and how much the Colonies would have to spend on defence if they stood alone, is a question which it is impossible to determine by any other test than that of separation. Let our colonial fellow-citizens take part in our Navy and our Army, let them feel that they are their Navy and their Army as well as ours—not in virtue of their paying a small hire for their use, but because the uniform that distinguishes those services is the uniform worn by their sons and their brothers—and they will contribute towards them with the generosity that is as characteristic of them when they give as close bargaining is characteristic of them when they are asked to pay.

It may be suggested that, so far from wishing to take a part in the Imperial Army, the self-governing Colonies will object to large forces of Imperial troops being quartered in their midst. But how is it that the withdrawal of the Regular forces from the Colonies in pursuance of the Little England policy of the sixties and seventies provoked such great resentment at the time?* It is true that at the last Conference the

* 'I entirely concur in New Zealand contributing to the utmost of its ability in aiding the Mother-country in the present critical

Colonial Prime Ministers rejected, and rightly rejected, a crude and immature scheme suggested by the War Office to the effect that they should organize, train, and pay for bodies of troops to be held at the disposal of the latter. But the case of an Imperial force stationed in a self-governing colony is quite different. Instead of costing money, it would bring in a large amount of custom. For that reason, even if for no other, the experience of the past has shown that the self-governing Colonies are always ready to welcome the presence of Regular troops or the establishment of a naval base. Nor need we suppose that the Colonies will resent either the opportunities offered to their sons to join the Imperial Army or the addition to their own population of the Reservists and retired officers who will tend more and more to settle down in their midst.

The Imperial troops in a colony would, for all civil purposes, deal with the local political authorities and be subordinate to the law of the land, exactly as they are subordinate to the civil authorities in England. It would be very desirable indeed, in order to secure the full development of the command system sketched out in

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affairs in the Transvaal. At the same time, I cannot refrain from deploring the fatal policy England embarked on when, about 1868, it withdrew every British soldier from New Zealand, Australia, Canada, and the Cape, and ignominiously dismissed Sir George Grey from the Governorship of New Zealand and from the service of the Empire for ever, because he protested against that policy as applied to New Zealand. I hope, when the war is over, England will see to it that none of her Colonies shall ever be left without possessing the emblems of her military power as well as of her naval power.'—Message sent to Mr. Seddon on December 20, 1899, by Sir G. Maurice O'Rorke, Speaker of the New Zealand House of Representatives.

the last chapter, that the local and Imperial troops in a colony should all be under one commander. At present in a colony like Canada, for instance, there is one General in command of the whole of the Canadian Militia, while another, entirely independent of him, commands one battalion of the Garrison Regiment and a handful of Engineers. This proposal, of course, implies that the commander in question must be appointed by the Colonial Government and be responsible to it. The proposal does not mean that the War Office abdicates any of its real power over the troops. The War Office pays for them, and therefore can order them wherever it likes at a moment's notice. If the Colonial Government attempted to interfere with their training, the War Office could always threaten to recall them. An analogy may be found in the case of the British troops in India, which are under the Indian Commander-in-Chief and the Indian Government. The difference between the two cases—namely, that India pays for the cost of these British troops, and therefore has a larger voice in deciding whether any of them can be withdrawn or not—does not affect the advantages from the point of view of organization and training that would spring from such a scheme. The unifying of all the troops in a political area under a single commander responsible to the local political authority would give an opportunity for real decentralization, while at the same time it would interest the Colonial Government and the colonial troops in military efficiency, and, through the contact of officers at the headquarter staffs of the commands and the emulation of manœuvres, tend to provoke a useful interaction of ideas on military matters and to stimulate the development of the colonial forces.

CHAPTER IV

REDISTRIBUTION: WAYS AND MEANS

So far, the subject of the redistribution of the Army has been discussed only in its general principles. To lay down a definite scheme in a work like the present would be presumptuous, and of little value towards the solution of the problem. But there can be no harm in outlining tentatively the general composition and distribution of a really Imperial Army such as might meet our requirements, while keeping well within the limits of our existing 'normal' expenditure, without insisting that a better scheme in detail could not be devised by the responsible authorities. It will be convenient to confine the discussion, in the present chapter at least, to the Regular Army. What part the existing Militia should play in a reform of our Imperial military organization is a question of some difficulty. It might either be merged in some uniform system of home defence, or, better, perhaps, improved in quality and training, though somewhat diminished in numbers, and kept for the double purpose of home defence and foreign service in great national wars. I will also confine myself to more urgent and more immediately practicable modifications without embarking upon possible future developments, a few suggestions for which will, however, be found in the concluding chapter.

To begin with, then, I would suggest an extension of the total period of service from twelve to fifteen years. Of these, nine should be with the colours and six with the Reserve, the soldier, however, having the option of joining the Reserve at the end of three years, and being allowed at the end of his nine years' service to enter the Royal Garrison Regiment or the Imperial Reserve Regiment, either instead of entering the Reserve or at any subsequent time if thoroughly healthy and of an age fit for service.

The old rotation of battalions, which the Cardwellian reforms did not venture to interfere with, should be abolished, and one battalion of a regiment be permanently localized abroad and the other at home—using 'home' in the wider sense for which I have been contending—though both battalions, for the present, at any rate, would be territorialized at home, and if a four-battalion linking were introduced, at least one of the regular battalions as well as the more strictly territorial units would remain in the United Kingdom. The change is one that has gradually been becoming more and more necessary. At present a battalion goes home after it has served a certain number of years abroad. But, as a matter of fact, none of the men, and very few of the officers, will have been out half that time. What goes home is really only the name, the colours, and the mess-plate, and now that the linked-battalion regiments have in most cases practically become units, this moving about of mere symbols has become unnecessary and wasteful.*

* 'The battalions, batteries, etc., on foreign service should remain there permanently, the officers and men changing after so many years. At Hong-Kong, for example, the battalions and batteries should never change, but their officers and men should

Of the 'home' battalions, some will be quartered in the United Kingdom, the rest in the self-governing Colonies. They will, however, all retain their existing depots, or *cadre* battalions, in the United Kingdom, and through them and the frequent interchange of officers retain touch with their Militia battalions and old regimental districts. Possibly in time some of the colonial battalions may start small depots locally if local recruits are available, and may also, if the Colonial Governments desire it, affiliate to themselves some of the local defence forces. The recruit will go from the depot to his home battalion, wherever it is, and at the end of three years' service enter the Reserve or go on to his foreign battalion.

We now come to consider the strength and distribution of the force that would probably suffice for our present requirements, though it must be remembered that any really serious change in the complexion of the political horizon might require considerable modifications, on which a competent general staff could alone advise. My object is simply to give a sketch of an army raised and distributed on sound principles, which would be more effective, and, I believe, less costly, than our present Army, and not to lay down for all time the limits of our military establishment. For the immediate purpose of discussing the distribution it will be convenient to speak in terms of infantry battalions alone, though, of course, it must be understood that analogous, though not always identical, modifications would have to

be drafted on to other stations as required. This would reduce Army work to about one-quarter of what it is at present, as tradition would not be lost, as it is now every day.'—15852: Lieutenant-General Sir C. Warren.

be introduced into the other branches of the service. At the present moment our infantry force consists of 156 battalions of Regulars, exclusive of ten battalions of Guards and five of the Garrison Regiment. Of these, fifty-two battalions are in India and Aden and eighteen in other foreign stations, not counting South Africa. Twelve of these last eighteen battalions—viz., the garrisons of Gibraltar, Malta, Singapore, Hong-Kong, Bermuda, Barbados, and Mauritius—could be replaced by battalions of the Royal Garrison Regiment. Sixty battalions, then, would suffice amply for the immediate needs of India, Egypt, and Ceylon. These would require an equivalent sixty battalions on the home establishment.

At the present moment there are only seventeen battalions in South Africa. In my opinion, twenty-four is the absolute minimum we should keep in that country. That would leave thirty-six for the United Kingdom. But of these one may hope in the near future twelve might be localized in Canada, Australia, or New Zealand. At least half, and preferably the whole, of the South African battalions should be kept on the higher peace establishment suggested in the preceding chapter, and the same should apply to twelve of the battalions in the United Kingdom, which might be kept permanently at Aldershot *en état de partir*. There would still remain thirty-six of the present line battalions over and above the drafting requirements. Some of these might perhaps be disbanded or converted into battalions of the Garrison Regiment or Imperial Reserve Regiment. But by far the best thing to do with the bulk of them, say twenty-four battalions, would be to reduce them to *cadre* or depot battalions on a skeleton establishment, available to fill up with Reservists in time of war. Some scheme

of that sort might incidentally help to solve the very pressing problem of the insufficiency of our establishment of officers to deal with the expansion of forces required in a great war.* The Guards would stand outside this organization, and form a complete division available either for despatch abroad in great Imperial emergencies or as the *corps d'élite* of the Home Army, the finely-tempered lance-head, as it were, of the national defence.

The coaling-stations already mentioned, together with the Cape Peninsula, Durban, and the Channel Islands, as well as the principal fortified naval bases in the United Kingdom, would be assigned to the Garrison Regiment, whose total strength might be brought up to twenty-four battalions. Another six battalions—or perhaps better, if they are to be mounted units, twelve battalions of 500—might provisionally be fixed as the strength of the Imperial Reserve Regiment.

This would leave the rest of the Regular Army free to be organized in compact units large enough to afford opportunities for the adequate training of staff and regimental officers, and for the carrying out of a thorough-going decentralization. The most convenient field formation for our Foreign Service Army will, as I have already suggested, in all probability be found to be, not the Army Corps, but the division of three infantry brigades with a due complement of mounted troops, artillery, and engineers, some 15,000 men in all. The Regular Army, then, exclusive of India, might be distributed as follows:† Two divisions in the South African command; three divisions in the United Kingdom, which might subsequently be reduced to two by the transference of a division to Canada, Australia, or New Zealand;

* See Appendix T. † See Appendix H.

a brigade, with a rather large allowance of cavalry and artillery, in Egypt;* and, lastly, in reserve in the United Kingdom, two skeleton divisions, the Guards and Household Cavalry and the Militia and Yeomanry.

So much for the distribution of the battalions in relation to the considerations of strategy and the drafts problem. We now come to the numbers of the establishment that would have to be kept up under the scheme here outlined. On a rough calculation I make out that the total peace strength of the Regular Field Army, including the Guards, would be nearly 100,000 men, or 175,000 if we include India. Adding to these some 22,500 for Garrison Artillery† and Garrison Engineers, 24,000 for the Garrison Regiment, 6,000 for the Imperial Reserve Regiment (a purely provisional figure), and 12,500 for *cadre* battalions and depots,‡ we get a total of

* The importance of Egypt from the strategical point of view has not been overlooked in the preceding chapters, but as its climate is not one suited for young soldiers, an increase in the British Army of Occupation, even if politically advisable, would be impossible without that very increase of the total Regular forces which we must try to avoid. Of course, political circumstances might render it necessary in the future to locate a larger force in Egypt, but even then it would probably be more advisable to recruit that force in India—let us say, to make up the Army of Occupation to a division by adding two Indian brigades—than to increase our already heavy burden. In the meantime we can do much by maintaining the strength and efficiency of the Egyptian Army.

† The bulk of whom might very well, like the Royal Garrison Regiment, be old soldiers.

‡ The present staff of cavalry and infantry depots is about 7,000, but in view of the longer service and the better class of recruits it is hoped to obtain, this might be reduced to under 5,000 for the reduced total of battalions, leaving some 7,500 for twenty-four skeleton battalions, each about 300 strong.

165,000, or, including India, of 240,000, men with the colours. According to the Army Estimates of 1903-1904, the normal peace establishment of British troops is 275,000, exclusive of the colonial battalions not recruited in the United Kingdom and of the staff of the Auxiliary Forces.

The first thing is to see how the proposed change affects the recruiting problem and the strength of the Reserve. Before the war we wanted over 40,000 recruits a year. Now, under Mr. Brodrick's scheme, we shall want very many more, especially as so large a proportion are likely not to extend beyond three years. Under the proposed arrangement the 'home' establishment would be rather over 90,000. To keep up an army at that strength on a three years' service some 35,000 recruits a year ought to be quite sufficient. From this home establishment the foreign establishment would require to be fed. An army of 90,000, on a six years' service in hot countries, would demand some 18,000 drafts yearly. That means that, even allowing for a wastage in three years of 5,000 out of the 35,000 originally enlisted, there would still remain over some 12,000 men who had done their three years' service, who could be set free to go directly into the Reserve.

The secretion of 12,000 men yearly, with a liability to serve twelve years in the Reserve, would give a Reserve force of, theoretically, 144,000; or, allowing for losses, say 110,000. A further 15,000 men a year (allowing for 3,000 wastage out of the 18,000 serving on) would pass into the Reserve after completing their nine years' service. This would give a second Reserve force of, say, 80,000, of whom, however, about 30,000 would be absorbed by the Royal Garrison Regiment and other

garrison corps, and by the Reserve Regiment, while a good many others would be required as sergeant-instructors, etc., in the Home Army. Still, there would remain a total Reserve of some 160,000 men, a very much larger force than any we have at present. If considered too large, there would be no difficulty in reducing it by only paying full Reserve pay to Reservists who come up for a short period of training with their battalions or in the Militia, say once in three or four years.

The number of men who leave the Army unprovided for at the end of seven or eight years' service is at present somewhere about 25,000 a year. Under the proposed scheme it would be a mere fraction of that number. Of these, many would find openings in connection with the Militia or with the local forces of the Colonies; others could be given work as soldier-servants or in other capacities in which the soldier is at present employed to the detriment of his training. The residue unprovided for would be so small that to all intents and purposes any young man entering the Army would feel that he had a life's career in front of him. To sum up, the proposed system would require very much fewer recruits, and for these it would offer far better prospects.

We may now consider the important question of cost. As a basis of comparison we may take the Army Estimates for 1903-1904. The 'normal' military expenditure that figured in these estimates was over 27½ millions, of which £2,667,000 covered the Militia and Volunteers and 25 millions the maintenance of an establishment of 214,000 men.* Under the proposed scheme the total

* Including 14,000 men belonging to colonial troops paid for by the Imperial Government, but excluding the staffs of the Auxiliary Forces.

Imperial establishment, exclusive of India and other troops not charged to the British taxpayer, would be about 180,000. A rough rule-of-three sum would therefore give the cost of the new scheme as nearly 21 millions. To this some two millions must be added to cover the greater cost of the troops kept in the Colonies and of the garrison troops, the larger Reserve, and the probable increase in the pensions vote, making a total of about 23 millions. This leaves us with some four millions to the good. The best use to which we can turn that saving will be to devote one million of it to the adequate development of the general staff and to other desirable measures of Army reform, and the rest to a thoroughly effective reorganization of our home defence forces.

In the foregoing estimates I have throughout taken my figures as high as possible, and have made no allowance for any economies that may be secured as the result of increased administrative efficiency. But taking the present 'normal' expenditure as my limit, I have attempted to show how, within that limit, a far more efficient Army can be kept up. For let us make a comparison of the two schemes—the existing scheme of 1901 and the scheme here outlined—as they would work in war. Under the 1901 scheme we can send abroad 120,000 men on mobilization. But we cannot send even a brigade without mobilizing. If the war is at the same time a naval war, it may be months before the troops can be despatched. When they depart they will leave the defence of the United Kingdom in a state of chaos, and when they arrive their whole organization will have to be recast to suit the practical conditions of war. Under the scheme here given we shall have practically the same number of men available for foreign service at

the outbreak of war.* But of these the two divisions in South Africa and one of the home divisions—*i.e.*, 45,000 men—would be ready to start at a moment's notice, and this, combined with the better strategic distribution, will give an enormous advantage that can hardly be reckoned in numbers. The Army Reserve will be larger, and, more important still, a thoroughly well-organized and effectively-trained Home Army will provide that real latent Reserve to which alone we must look to carry us through a great national struggle.

* Viz., eight divisions of 15,000—two in South Africa, five in the United Kingdom, including the Guards and Household Cavalry and the *cadre* divisions, and one in the other 'home' Colonies. South Africa would for the moment be left only with the battalions of the Garrison Regiment and Imperial Reserve Regiment and the comparatively unfit soldiers left behind by the field divisions on mobilization. But if that is a risk, it is a far less risk than any delay in sending troops to the front, where they are most required. See Appendix I.

CHAPTER V

HOME DEFENCE

THE reduction and redistribution of the Foreign Service, or Imperial, Army which has been advocated in the foregoing chapters has been throughout discussed on the assumption that the land defence of England, in so far as it is not already provided for by the Navy, can be quite sufficiently and more economically provided for by an army specially raised and specially organized for that purpose. Some extreme naval theorists would, indeed, maintain that England requires no second line of defence at all, and that the money spent on a home defence force would be far better spent on increasing the fleet. But it is doubtful whether that argument can be justified, even in the interests of the Navy itself. The Continent of Europe is so near and the shipping across of a small force is, after all, so comparatively easy a matter that an absolutely defenceless England would be a very serious hindrance to the unfettered freedom our fighting fleet ought to enjoy. We must rely on the Navy to prevent any invasion on a really large scale. But we must not put it into the power of any foreign adversary to immobilize an important part of our fleet by keeping 20,000 men and a fleet of transports in one of his harbours. It is a fundamental proposition of warfare

that offence is better than defence, that the sword is better than the shield. But a naked man cannot wield his sword so boldly and freely as one whose body is protected by armour. The only essential is that the armour should not be so burdensome as to exhaust his energies before and during the fight.

Again, though in our military preparations for warfare oversea we ought not to go beyond consideration of wars that are reasonably likely, still, it will not do to leave absolutely out of account the bare possibility of some struggle far greater than any we could afford to be continually prepared for. In such a case the existence in England of large numbers of men and officers possessed of some military training, and, what is almost more important, the existence of a vigorous military spirit in the nation, will prove invaluable. After all, one may well ask: What would have been our means of crushing the opposition of the Boers if the military spirit of our nation had not been kept alive in the preceding generation by the Volunteer movement in Great Britain and in the Colonies? Granting, then, the necessity of maintaining some military force in these islands for home defence, the next question is: What is to be the character and composition of that Army, how is it to be raised, and in what relation are the existing auxiliary forces to stand to it?

Before going into questions of detail, which may be dealt with in more than one way without great harm resulting, it is as well to lay down certain essential principles. Of these, the first and most important is that the Home Defence Army must be a Regular Army. By this it is not meant to imply that every member of it should be a regular or professional soldier, or that any

attempt should be made to give it the same character as the existing Regular Armies of this country or of any of the European Powers. What is meant is that it must be regularly organized. Proper organization is the most important part of an army, and the less training it is possible to give to the material of which the army is composed the more important does the function of organization become. That was the great lesson that Prussia taught an astonished Europe a generation and more ago; and in endeavouring to create an economical and efficient Army for the defence of these islands we can do no better than study carefully and intelligently the causes of Prussian success.

At the present moment there is practically no organization of the Auxiliary Forces. The whole Headquarters Staff of an Army of 300,000 men consists of General Turner, the Inspector-General of Auxiliary Forces, and Lord Chesham, Inspector-General of Yeomanry, each with one assistant! Nor has this microscopic staff any such independent position as is allotted, say, to the Army Medical Corps; it is one, and one of the least important, among the many subordinate branches of the Adjutant-General's department.* The Army List gives a nominal organization of the Volunteer brigades, but one can say without fear of inaccuracy that in reality

* 'It is a great pity, if I may say so, as you lead me up to the point, that we have a force of nearly 300,000 men which has absolutely no representative at all on the Headquarters Staff of the Army; there is absolutely nobody who has any knowledge of the Volunteer force. There is the greatest sympathy and the greatest goodwill on the part of the Inspector-General, but that the Inspector-General of Auxiliary Forces meets with a great deal of difficulty from his hierarchal superiors is a thing which is absolutely common knowledge.'—5,637 : COLONEL SIR HOWARD VINCENT.

the Auxiliary Forces possess no proper field organization. The one exception will be the case of those battalions of Militia and Volunteers that form part of the Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Army Corps, when and if these ever come into existence. And this exception will only hold good as long as the Regulars in those army corps are not moved, a supposition which, as I have shown already, is extremely unlikely to hold good in war. The situation is too monstrously absurd to be possible in any country but our own, or in connection with any department of our national life but the War Office.

The main reason for it is that the War Office, though it has reluctantly, and amid many protests, consented to spend money on the grants to the Auxiliary Forces, has steadily refused to recognise them as military forces in any real sense of the word, as being worth organizing or improving. Now and again it is seized with a sudden desire to exact a higher standard of training from the individual volunteer, without much regard to the peculiar circumstances under which the force is raised. But it has never conceded to the Auxiliary Forces that recognition of their status as the defenders of this country, that sense of national responsibility, which alone can stimulate them to improve themselves. No one can pretend that the present Volunteer force constitutes an efficient army. But, given proper organization, and given the excellent average quality of the men, it could be converted into an efficient army with a very small amount of training. The fact that, of the three chief factors that go to make an army, organization, quality, and training, we cannot in time of peace secure as much as we want of the last, is no reason for making no attempt to supply the first and most important factor of all. We can safely begin by

laying down that whatever the exact form the Home Army may assume, it must be seriously and adequately organized for war, and its members must feel that, after the Navy, the safety of the citadel of the Empire depends directly upon themselves.*

To secure that efficient organization it is essential in the first place that the Home Army should be represented by adequately staffed and clearly responsible departments at Headquarters. Given a reasonable system of decentralization, the Auxiliary branches in the executive departments need not be very large. The Home Defence section of the General Staff will, however, have to be a considerable body; for it will have to consider not only all the plans for the defence of this country against invasion, but also to work out schemes for the utilization of the Volunteer forces of the country for some great Imperial war.† In all, some fifty or sixty general staff officers, half at Headquarters and half with the home defence commands and divisions, would be sufficient.

Following on a proper organization of the Head-

* 'If you make up your mind that you are to reduce the Regulars or to send them abroad, and you mean to trust to your Volunteers, your Yeomanry, and Militia, then you must use every effort that you can to make them thoroughly efficient and good men.'—14,372: LIEUTENANT-GENERAL LORD METHUEN.

† On the neglect to work out any schemes in view of an emergency the report of the War Commission comments in terms of unqualified condemnation: 'Volunteers and Yeomanry proved themselves of value in the late war under an organization which was improvised for them in the face of the enemy. Where is that organization now? So far as we can learn, nothing has been done to collect systematically the valuable experience of the officers who worked that organization, certainly nothing to formulate that experience, to embody it in handbooks, or to create a framework which would be ready for prompt and effective action.'—REPORT p. 83.

quarters Staff of the Home Army, there must be a business-like organization of the Army itself. The general outline of that organization has already been sketched out in the second chapter. The United Kingdom should be divided into a certain number of administrative commands. The exact number of these will depend to some extent on the magnitude of the force that it will be found advisable to maintain, but the basis for them could very well be found in the present six army corps, which only require a certain amount of redistribution, mainly as regards the first and second, in order to make them suitable administrative units for home defence. These commands would each contain a certain number of divisions. Among these, in the case of most of the commands, would be a division or skeleton division of Regulars. But the bulk of the forces in them would be organized in divisions of Militia and Yeomanry and divisions of Volunteers and Cyclists. These would be completely territorialized, and we should then in the command system have a thoroughly developed and consistent system of territorial defence. If the Regular divisions happen to be at home when an invasion takes place, so much the better. But if not, and even if the Militia is away, the organization remains unaffected, and what it has lost in men it will rapidly make up in training. Under the present system, the mobilization of the Regulars involves so much strain and confusion that the Auxiliaries are almost forgotten altogether. Under a system like the one here suggested, mobilization on the part of the Militia and extra training for the Volunteers could be put in force automatically in any command the moment its Regular unit was withdrawn.

To achieve these results it is essential that the

commands should be thoroughly decentralized. Each of the six Generals should, within his command, be entirely and solely responsible for the raising of recruits, whether Regular or Auxiliary, for the training and education of his men and officers, and for the filling up, by selection, of all except the highest regimental appointments. The whole financial administration of his command—all questions of pay, food, housing, engineering works, expenses of manœuvres—should be directly vested in him and his staff. The control of the War Office or Headquarters Staff over his administration should only extend to frequent and searching inspection of his methods.

It will be noted that the essence of the scheme is that troops of the same kind are to be kept together in their units. There are to be no mixed formations, no Auxiliary divisions 'stiffened' with Regulars. One reason has already been given in the criticism of the existing army corps scheme. It is no use 'stiffening' a body of inferior troops with a backbone of Regulars in peace if you are almost certain to take out that backbone when war begins. Under the proposed scheme nobody need ever be withdrawn from his division. The Regular divisions go abroad as such. If Militia are wanted they will also go as divisions. However many units go abroad, the remaining ones are unaffected. Further, different kinds of troops require to be handled in different ways. A staff only accustomed to Regulars will often fail to get the best work out of men of good quality but inferior discipline, as was on many occasions shown in South Africa. Lastly, the whole theory of 'stiffening' is a delusion. With modern tactics, what encouragement is it to three battalions of Volunteers spread over several

miles of front to know that there is a Regular battalion also in action somewhere near? One might as well try to 'stiffen' a weak chain by inserting a stronger link here and there!

To be effective, the 'stiffening' must be bound up with the whole internal structure of the home defence units. In other words, the Home Army must have a regular, permanent, and adequately paid corps of professional officers—at any rate, for all the higher ranks—and a considerable proportion of professional non-commissioned officers. I do not mean by that that all the higher ranks in the Volunteer Army should be filled from the Regular Army, and that Volunteer officers should be debarred from aspiring to promotion. On the contrary, wherever a Volunteer officer showed ability and zeal, he should be the first to be offered a vacancy occurring in the rank above him, provided he is ready to give the time required. In the case of a battalion or brigade command, that might mean his whole time. But it should also mean an adequate recompense for that time. The result would be that many keen Volunteer officers whose ordinary professional income was not very large would, when the alternative was offered them, gladly throw over their profession in order to accept military promotion. The opportunity of attaining to high rank and adequate pay would give a stimulus to efficiency throughout the whole of the Home Defence Army. At present the position of a Volunteer officer confers no prospects and involves heavy expenses. Only rich men can afford to command Volunteer battalions, and the limitation of the area of selection seriously diminishes the quality. At present the Militia are 670 officers short on an establishment of 3,600, and the Volunteers 2,000

short on an establishment of 9,000. So serious is the state of affairs that a committee has been appointed, and has been sitting for some months. It is to be hoped that their recommendations will be thorough-going, and will help to awaken the nation to the necessity of proper organization for our Home Defence Army.

However appointed, the officers and non-commissioned officers of the Home Army must be as efficient for their own purposes as those of the Imperial Army for theirs, and, what is essential to that efficiency, must take themselves equally seriously.* A free interchange of officers between the two armies should be encouraged in order to facilitate promotion by merit and to prevent any estrangement of feeling and sentiment springing up between the two corps. The higher commands in the Home Army should be among the recognised prizes of the military profession, second only to the highest appointments in the Imperial Army; in fact, as a rule, no officer would be appointed to command a division of Imperial troops without having first gained experience in the command of one of the Home Army divisions. Similarly, the command of a brigade or a battalion in the Home Army would be the test of young Imperial officers noted for rapid promotion, or the reward of deserving and capable officers in either force for whom foreign commands were not available.

At the present moment there is every opportunity for

* 'The country must recollect that if they want an efficient army of Volunteers they must pay for it, and the first thing they have to do is to come down with a good strong hand on those gentlemen with money and no brains, take them out, and get men into their places in whom every man under them will have confidence.'—14,408 : Lord Methuen.

laying the foundations of a really good corps of officers for the Home Army. Given the reduction advocated in the preceding articles, there will be a certain number available from the Regular battalions which would have to be reduced. In many other battalions, again, in consequence of war promotions, there is a large superfluity of energetic and capable captains and majors who have commanded mounted infantry or irregular corps, or otherwise done good service, for whose energies it would be very desirable to find a larger outlet. Last, though by no means least, there is a very large number of useful officers of the existing Militia, or of the other Auxiliary and Irregular Forces, who have seen service in the late war. Now, if ever, is most certainly the time to undertake a thorough reorganization of our system, while we have superfluous military ability in abundance, and while the test of war is still near enough to enable us to choose the right men.

Another essential principle is that the composition of the Home Army must be thoroughly and unreservedly adapted to English conditions. England is, like the other countries of Western Europe, densely populated, and provided with a very close network of railways and roads, which renders easy the movement and rapid concentration of large numbers of men, and therefore gives an advantage for offence, and still more for defence, to the factor of numbers which does not exist in thinly-peopled countries such as South Africa. But, besides these features which it shares in common with the rest of Western Europe, England has certain other features peculiar to itself, which are of the very greatest military importance. The chief of these is the highly enclosed character of the country. In this respect no other

country in the world really resembles it. The small fields, with thick hedges and substantial fences dividing them, which are so characteristic of this country, and more especially of those parts which are likely to be the scene of any invasion, form a very serious barrier to the advance of any large force, especially of cavalry, artillery, or transport. An invading army would, in the greater part of England, be almost completely tied down to the roads.

Another consequence of the enclosed character of the country is that it is extremely difficult to detect the whereabouts of an enemy, even if in considerable force. Even the widest views only show a general vista of scattered trees and hedges. The roads are rarely visible for any length of their course. An army corps might be camping or marching within long-range fire, thousands of riflemen and batteries of field-guns and pom-poms might be lurking within deadly range all round, and yet give no sign of their existence. For the same reason, good long-range artillery positions are rare, for even when they do command a considerable extent of country they can find no definite target. On the other hand, short-range artillery, pom-pom, and Maxim positions are more frequent, and opportunities can easily be found for the skilful use of guns bringing a concentrated fire to bear from hidden positions on an enemy who exposed his batteries incautiously.

Above all, England is an ideal country for the mobile and highly-skilled rifleman. A ditch behind a thick-set hedge with 200 to 1,000 yards of open in front, intersected, perhaps, by iron railings or posts and rails—what better position could a rifleman desire? Yet the greater part of England is, from the tactical point of

view, nothing but an indefinite multiplication of such positions joining on to each other, just as kopje positions join on to each other in South Africa, and even more effective, whether for surprises, envelopments, vigorous attacks, or stubborn withdrawals. The necessity for individual initiative and local knowledge of the ground will be quite as important in enclosed country as in South Africa. The main defence of this country, therefore, must lie in its riflemen, skilled shots, capable of independent initiative, yet sufficiently disciplined to face heavy loss or undergo severe exertions.

To insure mobility a very large proportion of them ought to be cyclists, the cycle being much superior to the horse in a country abounding in good roads, and with numerous footpaths interrupted by gates or stiles. However useful cavalry may be in great open countries like South Africa or India, they are much hampered in enclosed country, and it is doubtful whether our Home Defence Army would require a very large mounted force.

In this connection it is impossible to overlook the complete transformation that the motor-car and the motor-bicycle have wrought in the whole problem of locomotion in England. Though confined only to the umpire staffs and not given to the combatants, the Motor Volunteer Corps were in some ways the most striking feature of the recent manœuvres. The fact that a corps of motor-cyclists scattered over half a dozen counties can be collected at a single spot by telegram in three or four hours has a military significance which it is impossible to overrate.* Highly mobile guns, both

* 'If I had motor-cars and a surplus of officers I should be employing them in every Volunteer regiment, every Militia regiment, and every Yeomanry regiment in going about the country, in

light and heavy, mounted on motor-cars or railway-trucks, might also be made to play a most important part in any operations in this country. Our Army abroad may have to manage with mules, trek oxen, camels, or native porters, but our Home Army ought to make the fullest possible use of all the advantages that a highly developed civilization can put into its hands.

Another point with regard to the defence of England that ought not to be overlooked is that it is an island. I only mention this because, as a matter of fact, it has hitherto been steadily overlooked in all the defensive plans concocted in the War Office. Those plans, after assigning the bulk of the Volunteers to the passive defence of the landward side of our coast ports, invariably look to the rapid mobilization at some central point of a 'field force,' which is to march forward and give battle to the invader on his road to London. If the enemy were invading across a land frontier such a policy would be perfectly sound, but in our case it means throwing away the whole enormous advantage that the man on shore possesses over the man trying to land. An actual landing we may not be able to prevent, but the landing force ought never to be allowed to get their scouts out, to deploy their units, or to start moving. Before they have finished landing, they should be surrounded by a ring of riflemen busily entrenching—a ring thin at first, but growing stronger with each hour that passes. Our schemes for home defence should therefore look, not to the mobilization of a field army at London or Aldershot, but to a general mobilization of all

intimately learning, so as to do it in the dark almost, the various parts of the country that would be most liable to be attacked.'—14,677 ; LIEUTENANT-GENERAL SIR A. HUNTER.

forces within range towards the point where the landing is being made. For every mile of coast-line, practically, there should be a separate mobilization scheme. Against an enemy deployed and on the move such a mobilization towards the point of military contact would be too dangerous, but against one who has to struggle with the difficulties of landing it is infinitely the best way, and is therefore the right one to adopt for people who live in an island—a fact which, as I said just above, the War Office might do well to consider.

We now come to the point that was deferred at the beginning of this chapter as being a matter of detail, capable of being settled in more than one way—viz., the question of raising the men required for the Home Defence Army. It is really a question of how far, on the one hand, the existing organizations could be adapted, or whether, on the other, it might not be desirable to reconstitute our Defence Army from the very foundations, if necessary, even at the cost of considerable changes in our national habits. To begin with, it is no doubt possible that a fairly efficient Army for our purpose might be constructed on existing lines.

In the first place, we have the existing Militia and Yeomanry. From the old national defence force the Militia has gradually become a paid short-service force recruited very largely from the same class as the ordinary soldier. The question is whether we should not frankly recognise the fact, improve the Militia on the existing lines, if necessary even reducing the present total, and insist that it should be liable to serve abroad in case of wars of the first magnitude, after the whole of the Regular divisions have been mobilized and despatched. By using the Reserve of the Regular Army as well as

the Militia Reserve for completing the Militia *cadres* on mobilization, we should have a very formidable force either for second-line troops abroad or for home defence at comparatively small cost. Taking the present strength of about 86,000 Militia infantry, that would allow of 144 battalions, or twelve divisions, on a peace establishment of 600 men. As the Militia Reserve might very well number 50,000, and the Army Reserve, which would remain over after mobilization of the Regulars, would still be about 100,000, there ought to be no difficulty in bringing the Militia infantry on mobilization up to 150,000. Whether the Yeomanry could be induced to enlist on the same terms as the Militia—*i.e.*, for foreign service in great national emergencies—is rather difficult to say, but such an arrangement would be worth trying to secure even at some increase of cost. Considerable increase of cost will also be required to make efficient the artillery of the Militia and the Auxiliary Forces generally. Assuming that the Yeomanry and Field Artillery for the Militia can be provided, the whole second-line force available on mobilization would be 180,000 men organized in twelve complete divisions. Added to the eight divisions of Regulars on the home establishment, that would give a total force for foreign service in great emergencies of twenty divisions, or 300,000 men, and still leave behind some 80,000 Reservists and Militia Reservists for the purpose of furnishing drafts.* -

The Volunteers on their side might be very considerably improved, but it must be understood that, if more is to be demanded of the Volunteers in the way of training, it will also be necessary to give them some return more

* See Appendix I.

adequate than the present capitation grant. In the Australian Colonies Volunteers are paid an ordinary day's wages for every day that they spend in training, and a proportionate allowance is made for smaller periods of time spent by the Volunteer in his military duties. An allowance of 2s. 6d. or 3s. a day would make a considerable difference to the popularity of the Volunteers. Those who could not afford the time to meet the conditions demanded of Volunteer corps should be encouraged to organize themselves in rifle clubs, to which the Government should give every facility.

The question that naturally arises is, What will such a defensive Army cost? Will not there be a risk of our spending, under the proposed scheme, even more money than we are spending now, without at the same time having the power of sending abroad in emergency more than a portion of the force we maintain for home defence? That is, perhaps, going too far. Looking at the small amount that is spent on the existing Militia and Volunteer forces, one cannot but feel that an expenditure of 4 or 5 millions a year would create a fairly effective Home Defence Army on existing lines; and if the scheme suggested above with regard to the Militia and Yeomanry is adopted, a large part of that force would be definitely marked for foreign service in a great national emergency.

Still, the fact remains that it is very difficult to judge of this question of expense with any certainty. As has already been said in a previous article, there are two main factors which affect the question of raising men to serve as soldiers. The first and, on the surface, most obvious is composed of the pay and the conditions of service offered; the second is the existence of a military

spirit and an inclination for military service in the public to which those conditions would naturally appeal. The two are closely bound together, and it is the absence of the latter, quite as much as the insufficiency of the former, that has hitherto been our chief difficulty in raising an adequate force of men fit to serve as soldiers. That difficulty may confront us again in constituting our Home Army. There are two ways of meeting it. One is to increase the inducement—in other words, to add largely to the expenditure or to relax the conditions of effective training. The other is to endeavour, if possible, to create in the nation the spirit which will provide recruits both for the Home and for the Imperial Army.

If the State were simply an ordinary business firm, it would of necessity be confined to the first method. But the State is not an ordinary business firm. It has not only the power to offer monetary and other inducements to men to take up its service, but it has also a second and almost greater power—that of moulding the minds and aptitudes of its future citizens so that they should come to look upon that service as more desirable than other employments offering equal inducements. That power it derives from its control over the national education. Nor can it reasonably be denied that the State has every right to exercise that influence in any direction that may be considered useful for the Commonwealth. If it spends large sums of money yearly in providing its future citizens with that knowledge which is to enable them individually to hold their own in the competition of life, it can also fairly insist on its right to equip them with attainments that will make them useful for the defence of the State as a whole, and with

a spirit that will make them eager to take part in that defence.

What we come to, then, is that the only true solution of our military difficulties, both as regards the Home Army and the Imperial Army, is to be found in the schools. Our military system can never be efficient and economical or possess any real vitality until the children of this country are taught the use of arms, and acquire a natural bent for military service in the schools.* If we are to hold our own among the progressive nations of the world we must during the next few years organize a comprehensive system of national secondary education, and of that education the use of the rifle and elementary field training should be essential features.

* 'I do not ask you as a Minister of the Crown to say whether the nation would ever submit to military education being made compulsory, but I do ask you as a former Secretary of State for War whether it would not have been an enormous advantage to you as Secretary of State for War if, on appealing to the manhood of the country, you had been appealing to a manhood who in their boyhood had been trained to arms?'—'That seems to me an obvious proposition.'—21,339: Lord Lansdowne.

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CHAPTER VI

NATIONAL MILITARY TRAINING

THE concluding suggestion of the last chapter was that our system of voluntary military service, whether in the Imperial Army or in the Home Defence Army, will never work satisfactorily unless it is based upon an underlying military spirit in the nation. That spirit can best be fostered through our national system of education; as was suggested in the last article, the true solution of our military problem must be sought in the schools. Given a military and patriotic element in our national education, there can be little doubt that moderate monetary inducements for the paid forces, and reasonable facilities for unpaid or partially paid Volunteers, will attract a sufficient supply of men both for home defence and for service abroad.

But should we even then be provided with a really economical and efficient organization? Would not the whole problem, at any rate as regards home defence, be enormously simplified in every way if that military element in the national education were enlarged in its scope and duration till it became a regular military training? Is there any really serious reason why we should not prolong the period of our national secondary education, giving the military element in it so large a

share, especially in the last year, that when the boy of seventeen left school for the business of life he should carry with him a knowledge of the art of war which would suffice, when perfected by one or two short periods of training in the national Militia (which would then take the place of the present Volunteers), to make a sufficiently well-trained soldier for the purposes of home defence?* The suggestion, in other words, is that the whole boyhood of the nation between the ages of sixteen and seventeen should receive a military education concurrently with the final stages of its mental education, and that every British subject, after having gone through this education, should be called upon to perfect himself by one or two further periods of training in the national Militia, so that he may be able to exercise his constitutional duty and privilege of defending his country against invasion.†

This would undoubtedly be universal service, but it would be something very different from the universal service enforced on continental nations by their necessities. In the first place, the period of training would be much shorter, and there would be no compulsory residence in barracks. Except for the short periods of field training, neither the cadet nor the Militiaman

* 'That brings in my point, which is this, that supposing the nation were to submit to universal military education at the age of eighteen for a year—three months, six months, nine months, or a year—as they did submit to universal Board Schools, I think with much of the Volunteer class they could be taught in six months.'—17,724: GENERAL C. E. KNOX.

† 'I think the fact of compelling every hale man to go through a military training is of the most enormous benefit to any nation from an Imperial point of view—from a national point of view.'—9,211: FIELD-MARSHAL LORD WOLSELEY. See Appendix K.

would have to leave his home. In the second place, the military education of our citizens, as far as the cadet training is concerned, would be under the direct control, not of the military, but of the educational authorities,* subject only to inspection and to that spur to efficiency which might be provided by a system of grants-in-aid from the War Office. Lastly, that military education would be made to keep touch with general education all through. At the same time that the growing boy would be learning to become a complete citizen, acquiring not only the aptitudes of the soldier, but the habits of discipline and self-restraint, he would also be improving his mind for the exercise of his future career, and developing his body to withstand the demands made on it by a life of industry.

It may be objected that so revolutionary a proposal as keeping the youth of the nation from entering on the business of life till they reach the age of seventeen is likely to cause severe industrial loss. The objection is ill-grounded. In actual life all those who can afford to give a longer education to their sons do so, not as a luxury, but because they know the great advantages that result from it in the long-run—advantages of mind and body which enable the well-educated man rapidly to overtake the less educated one who has specialized too early. If the argument is applicable to the well-to-do classes, why should it not also hold good for the nation as a whole? Continental nations who withdraw their young men from productive industry for a much longer period, and later in life, do not seem to have suffered industrially.

* This, of course, need not exclude the employment of a considerable number of officers of the Imperial or Home Army as instructors.

On the contrary, their statesmen, who, after all, are men of intelligence, believe that they benefit very greatly.

Time is, no doubt, an important asset for the industrial activity of the nation, but physical health is even more important. All the evidence that is available would seem to show that with the increase of the town population, most of it now in the second and third generation, the physique of the poorer three-quarters of the nation is steadily deteriorating. How serious the deterioration must be can be inferred from the fact that, even with the appallingly low standard we set for recruits for the Army, nearly three-fifths of the applicants have to be rejected! And physical deterioration cannot, even for industrial purposes, be compensated for by improved machinery. The finest minds may not always be found in the strongest bodies, but as a general rule mental and physical vigour go closely together, and physical degeneration is accompanied sooner or later by mental decay. There can be no doubt that stupidity, listlessness, incapacity for hard or prolonged work, early exhaustion, are all very largely dependent on lack of physical stamina.

It is very easy to decry the laziness and unadaptability of the British workman, and compare him with the workman of a generation or two ago or with the workman of America, but it would be wiser to try to discover and remove the causes of these defects rather than to attribute them to some natural vice of character. How far are they due to physical degeneracy, to weak constitutions, still further impaired by poor nourishment and early work? Nothing is more striking in modern industrial life than the speed with which working men are used up. In the upper classes a man at forty or

fifty is looked upon as still in the prime of life, and capable of many years more of his best work. But nothing is more difficult than for a working man who is over forty and has lost his employment to find it again. Places are naturally filled up by younger and more competent men, and the older man has perforce to accept an inferior position. But for the trade unions, the rapid elimination of the older men would be even more marked than it is.

In these circumstances, would it really be such a loss of national energy if the average working man of the country were to begin his work a year or two later, but endowed with a developed and matured physique that would enable him to work on at his highest efficiency for five or ten years longer? Nothing can be more striking than the way in which the miserable 'weeds' that form the bulk of the recruits for our Regular Army are developed into well-built, healthy men by a carefully-applied course of gymnastics and exercise. Should we not as a nation gain enormously if the whole mass of our population went through some such course? And if the physical aspect of our present civilization is none of the brightest, what are we to say of the moral side? In the general confluence of population towards the great centres, the old social order has largely melted away. Free education has diminished the respect for the authority of religion, and with it the respect for those rules of moral conduct which hitherto have found their main support in religious sanctions. Some steadying influence, some discipline, which will implant in our citizens' nature the habits of self-restraint, order, obedience to law, and co-operation, is an indispensable complement to our system of universal education.

That influence a military training might well be made to provide. Even in our present Army, which has never taken its educational functions seriously, the moral improvement of the young loafers and 'Hooligans' who form so large a proportion of our recruits is no less marked than the physical. Whatever the defects in the purely technical training of our common soldiers that the late war brought out, it also displayed in the most striking fashion their unselfishness, devotion to duty, fortitude, and humanity. Can anyone assert that those virtues are characteristic of the class who enlist? If our soldiers showed themselves 'gentlemen' in the war, it was not because they were gentlemen to begin with, but because they were made so in the school of the Army. There are few things that we English value more highly than the education of character, which is the best feature of our otherwise somewhat defective public school system. That education of character is at present confined to the middle and upper classes. Could we not, by some system on the lines of that here advocated, extend it to the whole nation?

Some will object to any such proposal on the ground that, however desirable the end sought, the means by which it is to be attained—namely, compulsion—is an evil that far outweighs the good. Compulsion is 'un-English,' 'against all liberal principles,' and so forth. But is compulsory football at our public schools un-English, and, if so, from what alien source have we borrowed the detestable practice? Is compulsory education or compulsory taxation a violation of liberal principles? There is no English proverb which, by foreigners at least, is considered more characteristically English than the one which says that 'time is money.'

And if we are justified in taxing the one, why not the other? It has often been pointed out that there is a considerable danger in letting the mass of the people feel that they bear no share in the burden of keeping up the State. On the other hand, it is equally true that ordinary taxation presses far more hardly on the poor than on the rich, and that it is therefore, from that point of view, desirable to remove the burden from the large mass of the poor on to the shoulders of the wealthier minority. The adage about time and money may help to solve the dilemma. The poor cannot spare their money, but they can more easily spare their time, and as a mere matter of taxation it is a sound principle to raise taxes in the manner in which they are most convenient to the taxpayer. Again, compulsion is unjust only when it is partial or arbitrary, as in the case of compulsory service by ballot. Where 'compulsory' is synonymous with 'universal' there is no injustice; on the contrary, in such matters 'freedom' may spell unfairness. It is obvious that if taxation were a voluntary matter the public-spirited and patriotic would be overtaxed and impoverished for the benefit of the mean and the self-indulgent. But what applies to the contribution of money also applies to the contribution of time. At the present moment the Volunteer sacrifices a good deal of his leisure time, and often even of his business interests, to his patriotism, and it is that fact which makes it so difficult to demand from Volunteers the sacrifice necessary for an adequate training. But make Volunteer or Militia service universal and men will accept it cheerfully, for they will no longer fear that they will be handicapping themselves against others in the race of life.

Another objection often heard is that universal training would provide us with more men than we want. That argument displays a radically false conception of the whole subject. Do we object to universal education on the ground that 200,000 or 300,000 men who can read or write are as many as we want? On the contrary, we believe that the more educated men we have the better, and that the higher our *minimum* level of education, the higher will be also the *maximum* level attained by a certain proportion. And, just so, the more trained men we have the better, and the more universal and the more thorough the training of our nation for home defence, the higher will be the military qualities of those who devote themselves specially to the art of war in our Foreign Service Army.

It was the universal and compulsory practice of archery in England, introduced by Edward I. after the Welsh wars, that made possible those small but invincible expeditionary armies that, under Edward III. and Henry V., overthrew the overwhelming hosts of France at Cressy, Poitiers, and Agincourt. For nearly a century the English archer enjoyed a military supremacy over his opponents to which no other European soldiery—neither Swiss, Spaniard, French, nor Prussian —has ever attained. And the secret of that supremacy lay in the perfection of individual skill in our little armies, based on a high standard of universal proficiency throughout the nation. What we did with cloth-yard shaft and gray goose-feather six centuries ago, we can do with the rifle to-morrow, if we set ourselves to do it in the spirit and with the insight of our first and greatest Army reformer.

Besides, though the whole nation ought to pass

through the cadet training in the schools, considerable exemptions might be given as regards the subsequent Militia training. For instance, railway employés might be exempted as a condition of the railway companies putting themselves completely at the disposal of the State in case of invasion, and working out and practising schemes of railway mobilization. Similarly, all who are concerned with our shipping and shipbuilding industry might be exempted under conditions that secured a corresponding advantage to the State. And while we are on this point it may be as well to add that, though the scheme outlined above has been discussed here only from the point of view of the Army, it would naturally extend no less to the Navy. Wherever possible, the cadet training ought to look to naval requirements; and a naval reserve training, as an alternative to the period of Militia training, should be an essential feature of any system of national training whose object is to qualify our citizens to fulfil, in their own persons and not through substitutes, their duty of protecting those institutions on which their well-being and prosperity are based.

CHAPTER VII

THE NEED OF AN IMPERIAL STAFF

THROUGHOUT the preceding chapters repeated reference has been made to the need in our military system of some organization corresponding to the General Staff of foreign armies, which should prepare in peace for all possible warlike eventualities. This is the most important point of all those which have been touched upon hitherto, for upon it all the rest depend. Once given a 'brain of the Army,' an organization which can both acquire knowledge and use that knowledge to guide military policy, and the education and training, the distribution and the organization, of our forces will automatically and continuously be adjusted to the conditions of our Imperial policy, and to the constant changes in the art of war. Why this should be so, and why our present system has failed so utterly in the past to make provision for war—and will fail again if brought to the test—it will be the object of this chapter to explain.

The fundamental difference between the organization of an army—or, for the matter of that, a navy—and that of any other public department or private business is that the end for which an army exists—namely, war—is a state of affairs which exists only at uncertain, and, in the case of civilized States, comparatively rare,

intervals. Manœuvres and small wars against natives are useful as a training, and afford some test of the personal ability of officers and of the efficiency of arms and equipment under varying conditions, but they can provide but little experience available for the conduct of serious warfare. Small wars against ill-armed and ill-organized enemies are often positively harmful, for they tend to inculcate a contempt for strategy and scientific tactics and a belief that energy and a careful attention to the question of supplies are all that is wanted in war. An army considered as an organization can have no real practice for war in peace; the most it can do is to study a series of intricate and uncertain problems by the light of past history and present research, and make such preparations as seem most likely to meet the case. To take an analogy from chemical science, the conduct of a war is not like that of some chemical manufacturing process, which, once well established, can be run on business lines by ordinary 'practical' men, but resembles more that of some important new experiment which requires the training and the imagination of the scientist. It is, essential, therefore, that the theoretical study of, and, as it were, 'laboratory preparation' for, war should play a large part in the organization of any army that is to succeed.

The end for which armies exist is war. Their actual existence is mostly one of peace. If peace involved nothing more than a period of rest after the exertions of war and a time of leisure for the study of the military art, no great harm would result. Unfortunately, the mere existence of an army in peace-time—the raising, housing, feeding, and paying of men, the rotation of garrisons, the maintenance of discipline—involves a multiplicity of problems which have to be dealt with

continuously and promptly, and which require a large organization and much ability to deal with them satisfactorily. So numerous are these problems, so important and pressing do they seem compared with the remote and dim possibilities of war, that they speedily absorb the whole energies of the Army from the highest down to the lowest.

However much individuals fight against it, the inevitable tendency of any army in peace is to become wholly taken up with the problem of its own existence. Most of the time of the men is spent in looking after their uniform and equipments, in tidying and cleaning their barracks, in carrying coals, or doing the hundred and one odd jobs that the peace life of a regiment requires. Officers are concerned with the licking into shape of recruits, with the maintenance of discipline, with the inspection of cook-houses, the supervision of canteens, or the distribution of pay. Army Headquarters are beset daily with a vast heap of demands for new barracks, rifle ranges, or what not; with appeals on a score of difficult and delicate cases—in short, with every sort of intricate financial and personal problem. All these things are necessary and must be settled. Even decentralization, though it may help to distribute the burden better and to save correspondence, cannot spirit them away. Yet they have nothing to do with war, and only lead to forgetfulness of war. And one day war comes, and with it a terrible awakening for a nation that has staked its all on the strength and courage of its army. Such was the fate of Prussia in 1806 and of France in 1870. Such, too, was our own experience in the Crimea, and again in the late war in South Africa.

What remedy can be found for this state of affairs?

How can an army in peace keep its gaze steadfastly directed on the end of war? There is only one solution, and that is the one discovered by the nation that underwent the most terrible experience as the penalty of military unpreparedness. For six years after the Battle of Jena the kingdom of Prussia existed only by sufferance as the vassal of an arrogant conqueror. After Napoleon's overthrow the Prussian reformers laid down the lines of the system which was destined to raise Prussia to the position of the most powerful State in Europe. Knowing the impossibility of keeping peace routine from absorbing all the energies of the administrative and executive departments, they set to work and created a new department, a new factor in organization, which should be concerned only with war and warlike policy, and should have no executive or administrative duties whatsoever.

This was the 'General Staff,' a department which has since then become an integral part of every European army except our own. The last army to adopt it has been the United States Army. But the lessons of the Cuban and Philippine wars convinced President Roosevelt and his Secretary of War, Mr. Root. A General Staff was created early this year, and is now being organized with characteristic vigour and thoroughness. In peace the General Staff prepares for war—first, by acquiring knowledge about war in general, and about specific wars in prospect, by studying the experiences of previous and contemporary campaigns, by collecting information of every kind about the forces and territories of potential opponents, and by the observation of scientific progress in all its branches; secondly, by utilizing the knowledge so gained to devise general schemes of operations for any conceivable war, to lay down the outlines

of the organization and distribution of the army, and to keep the education and the tactical training of officers and men on a level with the requirements of the future.

These duties of the General Staff are very unlike the ordinary peace duties of an army. But they correspond very closely to the duties of the staff of an army in time of war, when the collection of information about the enemy's dispositions and the framing of plans of operations against him become the most important things to be considered. It is only in accordance with the fitness of things, then, that, when war breaks out, the General Staff, which during peace has been comparatively in the background, should practically take over the great army which the administrative and executive departments have in the meanwhile been feeding, paying, and drilling, and with it strike the mighty blows for which it has so long been preparing itself, in constant touch with the great realities of war.

An absolute separation, indeed, between the army as a whole and the General Staff does not exist in Prussia. On the contrary, it is of the very essence of the Prussian theory that the General Staff, as a body, and each individual member of it, should be kept in closest contact with the practical everyday working of the army. There is no separate staff corps, but the officers of the General Staff are specially selected from the body of the army, to which many of them return for good after a short period of General Staff work. But even those whose inclinations or qualities lead to their being selected for a career on the staff are from time to time ordered to take a short spell of regimental duty in order that in their theoretical studies and paper schemes they may never learn to forget the personal character and the

moral and intellectual attitude of the private soldier and the regimental officer, the foundation on which all their plans have to be built.

But not only must each individual atom of the brain of the army in Prussia have practical experience as a soldier, but the brain itself as a whole is kept in contact with the body of the army by the connecting-link of a nervous system centring in the former, but yet everywhere intertwined with the latter. Members of the General Staff are attached to every army corps and division of the army, and subject to the general commanding the unit. These General Staff officers are preserved from non-military work by the existence of an administrative staff, or *adjutantur*, to use the German expression, and are thus free to do for their unit exactly what the General Staff as a whole does for the army—*i.e.*, supervise the education and training of the unit to which they are attached, and work out schemes of mobilization. The generals thus get to look upon their staff officers as their expert military advisers, and learn to work together with them in peace exactly as they will have to do in war.

In war these officers of the General Staff help to keep the troops in touch with the General Staff at Head-quarters, or 'Great General Staff.' They receive the orders of the latter—technically speaking, the orders of the Commander-in-Chief—help to explain them to their generals by the light of their knowledge of the plans of the staff, and in their turn work out the details of the orders which the generals give to their subordinates. Summed up briefly, the Prussian system is that in times of peace the General Staff prepares itself for war, while the executive keeps the army going in accordance with the general principles laid down by the staff; in war the

operations are conducted by the generals, but throughout inspired and guided by the staff.

The advantages of the system are obvious. War is never lost sight of, and purely peace considerations are never allowed to modify the general organization of the army. The fiction of 'normality,' the idea that war is a troublesome, though sometimes glorious, interlude in the normal existence of an army, can never gain ground. The peace organization of the army transforms itself naturally and without friction into the war organization. Those who in peace have been studying the enemy's general strength and character, and framing the general plan of operations, continue in the field to study his detailed dispositions and to work out the detailed plans required by the circumstances of the moment. Those who have been engaged in disciplining, training, and generally providing for the soldier, continue to exercise the authority and personal influence that belongs to them, and can see in his conduct in the field the direct result of their past efforts. There is no discontinuity, none of that general re-shuffling of duties and uncertainty as to their sphere which are so terribly apparent when an Army like our own takes the field.

The Prussian system is no less sound psychologically. It divides its men in accordance with natural differences of temperament and ability. The qualities essential for the theoretical study and preparation of war are keen reasoning power, memory, insight, imagination, intellectual boldness—in fact, all the highest qualities of the intellect. These qualities are all equally necessary for staff work in war. The qualities essential for successful administration in peace are common-sense, attention to detail, promptitude in decision, energy in

execution, and the power of inspiring confidence, zeal, and affection. All these, again, are essential to the executive leader in war. Rarely are these two sets of qualities found equally fully developed in the same individual. On the contrary, the most excellent Adjutant-General may prove a hopeless failure in the conduct of a difficult strategical operation, the ablest and most promising young staff officer may be quite unable to keep order in his company.

Hardly less important than the function of the German General Staff in keeping the army prepared for war is its educative and unifying influence over the whole body of officers. The higher education of officers is directly under the General Staff, and there is no duty which the great von Moltke took more seriously than the giving of lectures, and the setting and criticising of problems for the benefit of junior officers. The staff college is in closest connection with the General Staff, and the teaching appointments at it are among the most keenly-coveted prizes of the military profession, for their holders are known as men marked for rapid promotion. Large numbers of officers who are destined to make their career in the ordinary work of the army nevertheless pass through a short period of study and staff work in the historical, intelligence, or mobilization sections, and form a useful reserve of officers qualified for staff duties in war. Very few of the higher appointments on the executive side are, in fact, held by officers who have had no staff training whatever.

In this way a common spirit and a common theory of war permeates the whole German Army, and, as regards the higher staff officers, it may even be said that in any particular war they all have a common theory as to how

that war should be fought. The whole of von Moltke's conduct of the campaign of 1870 was based on the assumption that it was enough to let Generals know what he wanted, and that they and their staffs would do it in exactly the way he would have done had he been present. Nothing is more striking in von Moltke's own account of the war than to notice how often he remarks that his orders had been anticipated by officers acting on their own initiative. How different from our Army, where there are almost as many theories of war as there are generals, as South Africa repeatedly testified! And if the cause of that lies partly in the difference of the practical teaching they have had, some in Afghanistan, some in Egypt, some in Ashanti, then surely the need of the unifying influence of a General Staff with us is all the greater, so that all may work effectively together in any great war which we may yet have to face, and in which the troops from every part of the Empire will have to fight side by side. And not only is it unity of thought, but unity of feeling, that is helped by a General Staff. All staff officers throughout the Army are personally known to each other, and are animated by a common loyalty to the corps, whose success also means the success of the campaign. In an army like ours loyalty practically ceases with the regiment. Beyond that there may be patriotism, or personal loyalty to a particular commander, but there is very little loyalty of the Army, and still less loyalty of the different forces, Regular, Auxiliary, or Colonial, towards each other. Compared to an army like the German, our Army is still in the tribal stage of development.

Now let us turn to the preparation for war as it exists in our own Army. At the opening of the last century

our Army was organized on very much the same lines as the Prussian. The functions of information and preparation were part of the Quartermaster-General's Department—out of which, it is worth noting, the Prussian General Staff originally developed—and though in peace the administrative functions of the department obscured the really more important duties of preparation, they remained latent, and could be resuscitated and expanded on the approach of war. This was the system on which we worked successfully in the days of Wellington, and it is the system that still exists in India.*

But in England the long peace that followed the Crimea, combined with the enormous complexity and difficulty of the task of recruiting, maintaining, and distributing the Army, and of carrying out small wars against unskilled adversaries (which, from the general point of view of organization and preparation, form part of the 'peace routine' of our Empire), led to a serious deterioration below the level of the preceding century. The Adjutant-General's Department, pre-eminently the disciplinary and administrative office, grew steadily in importance, and swallowed up the functions of other departments. The abler the men appointed to it, the worse the ultimate confusion. The Quartermaster-General's functions were, after 1888, reduced to a mere business control from Headquarters over supply, transport, and the moving of troops, and the analogous functions on the District Staffs vanished altogether.†

* For an account of that system and of its decline, see the memorandum by Sir W. Nicholson in Appendix L.

† 'Officers, therefore, with Indian experience were the only officers who since 1888 had received practical peace training in the most important duties devolving on the General Staff in war.'—18,189: Sir W. Nicholson.

The collection of information was left to a miserably starved little office, without status or authority, called the Intelligence Division, which squatted in a private house in Queen Anne's Gate, and collected such scraps of information as its scanty means allowed. These it published in the form of maps, reports, notes, etc., in case one of the busy administrative officials who might nominally be responsible for military policy might find time to glance at them and acquaint himself with some absurdly elementary fact, such as the number of Boers likely to take the field or the strength of their armaments. Strategical Department there was none at all; the preparing for war was left entirely to chance.*

The evils of this state of affairs were clearly set forth by the Hartington Commission. The creation of a

* 'We were not at that time charged with the preparation of offensive schemes at all. There was no one at the War Office who was specifically charged with that except Lord Wolseley himself.'—474 : COLONEL E. A. ALTHAM.

'Did you ever suggest that secret instructions should be prepared and sent to the General Officer Commanding in South Africa for his guidance in the event of war breaking out ?'—'Yes.'

'Do you know if those suggestions were acted upon ?'—'I believe not.'—5,169-5,170 : SIR J. ARDAGH.

'Those schemes, we have been told, were all based upon the actual garrisons then in South Africa ?'—'All based upon the actual garrisons then in South Africa.'

'Was there any scheme of defence based on the addition of 20,000 men or 10,000 men ?'—'No.'—5,057-5,058 : SIR J. ARDAGH.

'We never thought for a moment of Ladysmith being a defensive place.'—5,077 : SIR J. ARDAGH.

'As you know, in India the Intelligence Branch do draw up specific schemes; but there was nothing of that sort given to Sir George White that I ever saw. There was a good deal of useful information given us in books, but there was nothing to guide us as to what our action should be.'—13,891 : SIR IAN HAMILTON.

General Staff was emphatically urged by the whole Commission, with the exception of Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, who, in an extraordinarily fatuous minute of dissent, declared that all such warlike operations as we were ever likely to wage could be quite well improvised by the General on landing, and that the continual study by a General Staff of the ways and means of carrying on wars would only prove an irresistible temptation to provoke them.* The man who gave vent to these silly opinions shortly afterwards became Secretary of State for War. When the Unionist Government came into power in 1895, it adopted some of the recommendations of the Hartington Commission. But it missed the whole point of them by lumping the Chief of the Staff's functions, whose very essence lay in their being separate from executive work, in with those of the busiest of executive officials, the Commander-in-Chief, without even making provision for a staff to carry them out.

The state of affairs at Headquarters was exactly matched in the districts. The various Generals had 'staff officers,' but no distinction was made between administrative and consultative duties. What was wanted as a 'staff officer' was an energetic junior who could take current work off his General's shoulders, who had got the regulations by heart, and knew how to circumvent the War Office—in fact, anything but the man who wished to spend his time on thinking out war problems or introducing new ideas as to training.

The South African War brought to light the defects of our system in the most glaring fashion. There was nothing that can be called a real preparation for the

* See Appendix P.

war. The Intelligence Division had got together some fairly accurate, but 'wholly' inadequate, information, which was no doubt looked at; but it is evident that its real meaning was never grasped by those responsible for the composition and strength of the force sent out. That was the inevitable consequence of the divorce between the collection of information and the framing of policy. We sent out an Army that was too small, composed mainly of infantry instead of mounted troops, and trained almost entirely with a view to European fighting.* Of the Generals who commanded it, some were War Office officials; others essentially fighters, but without a notion of strategy or tactics; others excellent staff officers, but lacking executive ability or resolution; and others, lastly, merely older and less vigorous regimental officers. For these Generals scratch staffs were hurriedly scraped together, with very little regard to their war qualifications. The Generals, even the very best of them, unused to a proper division of staff work, never made proper use of the staffs; the various staff officers never knew the limits of their own duties. The result was hopeless confusion at the headquarters of every larger force. Whether in disasters like 'Mournful Monday' and Colenso, or in smaller affairs like the loss of Lord Roberts's convoy at Waterval Drift, bad staff work lay at the root of most of our failures.† And as things are at present the experiences of the South African War will only be repeated over again in the next war we wage.

* 'If you think out the situation beforehand, you will have an implement suited for whatever work is likely to have to be done. I think that this sort of work is the duty of the General Staff.'—19,350: Colonel Haig.

† See Appendix M, evidence of Lord Roberts.

There is only one remedy, and that is to keep up the theoretical study, of, and practical preparation for, war by the creation of an independent non-executive department with a general control over policy. This department must be sufficiently large to cope with the difficult problems of Imperial defence, and must be under the ablest men in the whole Army. Its functions must be paralleled throughout the separate units of the Army by the appointment of war staff officers equally free from executive duties. It must have under its control the higher education of the Army and the decision of the principles on which its tactical training is to be carried out. Then when war comes upon us it will not upset our whole organization, but only put to the test the thoroughness of our preparation. Never again must the outbreak of war find us ignorant, undiscerning, and unready; never again must we acquiesce in the thought of muddling through, at vast cost of money, time, and human suffering, wars that foresight and knowledge applied to preparation could decide surely, rapidly, and, in the long run, humanely.

The exact position which the thinking department should occupy in our Army will be discussed in a later chapter. There is no reason for us, with our peculiarly organized Empire and our peculiar Army system, to copy slavishly the Prussian precedent, so long as we make sure of embodying the principle. Going back to our own past history, and following the same historical development that the Prussians followed, we might restore and amplify the former importance of the Quartermaster-General's Department, taking away from it those purely business functions which have been its principal work since 1888, amalgamating with it the

existing Mobilization and Intelligence Department and the Education Department.* And on whatever lines the War Office is reconstituted, and whatever title is given to the head of the thinking department, it is essential that he should not be a subordinate of any other military officer, that he should be the principal adviser of the Secretary of State and of the Cabinet on all matters of policy,† and that he should be in direct

* 'The Intelligence Department should be brought as far as possible to resemble and perform the functions of, and to have that influence on the military policy of the country which is attributed, very properly and correctly, to the body known in Germany as the Great General Staff. I think the Intelligence Department, although it has grown up gradually and increased in influence since its first creation, has not now, and has not for many years had, the influence on the military policy of the country that it ought to have. I should very much like to see the Intelligence Department improved or modified or expanded so as to resemble in some degree that institution known as the Great General Staff. In its present size it is quite impossible that the work appertaining to the General Staff could possibly be done by the number of officers and men employed in it. A very large increase would be necessary, and above that a very pronounced recognition that the recommendations of the Intelligence Department were to carry a definite weight in the councils of the military authorities of the country. I do not think they have done so hitherto.'—4,966: SIR J. ARDAGH.

† 'The great benefit the intellectual equipment would be is that you would get what is very much wanted—a military policy for the Army.

'By "military policy" I mean first a certain amount of looking ahead beyond the idea of the moment.

'As regards organization?'—'As regards organization, as regards numbers, as regards defence, as regards offence, as regards buildings, as regards comfort of soldiers, as regards recruiting, and the conditions under which soldiers live—all those things require a policy, and they are constantly changing.

'The intellectual equipment would deal with military policy only,

and continuous contact with the corresponding departments—equally non-existent at present, but equally indispensable—in the Navy and Foreign Office. Naval, military, and foreign policy must go hand in hand. There must be no waste of effort, no expensive duplication, no fatal misunderstandings.

The mechanism which could enable these different thinking branches to come together and harmonize their policy exists already, in a rudimentary form at least, in the shape of the recently reconstituted Imperial Council of Defence, and we may hope that in time the Council of Defence may yet become the natural centre and head of the thinking departments that ought to guide our naval, military, and foreign policy. Nay, more: containing as it does the political heads of the great Imperial departments of State, with their expert advisers, it might, with the inclusion of representatives of India and the self-governing Colonies, become an Imperial Advisory Council — as it were, a political General Staff of the Empire. And just as the German General Staff directs the policy of the army without interfering in the absolute decentralised autonomy of the army corps, so this political General Staff might guide the policy of the Empire as a whole, without interfering in the practical independence of every part. Such a solution might succeed in avoiding those difficulties and dangers in the way of any ordinary scheme of federation

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and have nothing to do with the Army, nothing to do with the Commander-in-Chief; it is a question of the Secretary of State for War. When we go to war, the Secretary of State for War becomes the most important official in the country, and he ought to have an office which knows all about that, but he has nothing now.'—15,522-15,526: SIR R. BULLER.

which to many thinkers seem to present an insuperable barrier to a really united Empire. After all, direct government by representative assemblies is not the last word in politics, and it may well be that the secret whereby Prussia reconciled administration with forethought and decentralization with unity in military matters can be turned to account by us for all the great business of an Empire—a matter worth thinking about.

But to return to the immediate question: There can be no doubt that the Council of Defence can be made of the greatest service for the development of our military system; and the more closely the General Staff of the Army keeps in touch with it, and the more it is detached from the current routine of the British War Office, the nearer will it be to becoming an Imperial General Staff, and the better will it be able to deal with the problems of Imperial defence. The late war ought to have shown us that what we must rely upon for any great emergency is not merely the British Regular forces, but the forces of the Empire. These forces are not under the existing War Office, and never will be. Neither India nor the great self-governing Colonies are in the least likely to submit to the direct interference of the War Office in their affairs. And yet it is supremely desirable that all the forces of the Empire should be organized on the lines of a general Imperial policy, and that in their education, training, and equipment they should, within limits, preserve a certain uniformity.

At present there is no uniformity, either in policy or in any other respect. The forces under the War Office, the forces of the Government of India, the forces of the self-governing Colonies, the forces under the Colonial Office, are all absolutely detached. There is no con-

certed policy; none has any real notion of the value of the other. Typical of our military anarchy is the fact that between two guns of the same type in the British and the Indian Army there is a slight difference of bore which makes it impossible to interchange ammunition—a difference which both sides deplore, but neither has yet seen its way to remedy.* In all these questions an Imperial General Staff, exercising no executive or administrative interference, but containing in itself representatives of all the different forces of the Empire, and from its ranks providing those forces with staff officers, could exercise an enormous influence. The War Office as it stands will never do much either to unify the Empire or to prepare it for war. A really Imperial General Staff might work marvels in both directions.

* 'I think that one of the great difficulties, and almost dangers, in our Army system is that the Indian and Home Army Departments are not organized on similar lines. The great advantage would be that, if you had them organized on the same lines, you would have power of reinforcement of the Army departments in the event of any large campaign occurring either in India or in any other part of the world.'—20,120: Sir E. Collen.

CHAPTER VIII

BRAIN STARVATION

So far I have only dealt with the general principles which make it necessary that there should be a separate branch of our Army organization which should be specially concerned with preparation for war. But the mere separation of what may be conveniently called 'General Staff' functions from the administrative work of the Army will not be enough in itself, unless it is also accompanied by the creation of a department large enough to carry out these duties adequately. It has been said that genius lies in 'an infinite capacity for taking pains.' However that may be, it certainly is the case that all really great work is based upon an infinite amount of pains taken by somebody or other, whether it be by a single man or by a large body of men working together upon their subject for years, or even for generations.

In no art is this more so than in the art of war. The science of making war is summed up, in the main, in the application of a few broad, common-sense principles to situations of extraordinary complexity of detail. The neglect of a single detail may bring the most elaborate and ingenious plan to hopeless grief, and there is not a single factor that may not in given circumstances be a

matter of vital importance. Serious preparation for war admits of no sketchiness of treatment. A handful of officers, however capable and diligent, can never collect or apply the knowledge which a great nation must possess if it wishes to bring its own cherished type of civilization safely through the great world struggle for existence.

All this is obvious enough if we consider for a moment the character of the information required to wage any war successfully. In the first place, it is essential to have the fullest knowledge of all the physical features of the possible area of operations, down to the smallest detail that can have any bearing on the plans for a march or the dispositions for a battle. The shape of every hill and valley, the depth of every river, the whereabouts of every pool of drinkable water, the course and character of every railway, highroad, and footpath, are all matters of the first consequence. If sufficiently good maps exist, they must be secured, reproduced in large numbers, and carefully studied. If not, the maps must be made, whatever the cost and however difficult and dangerous the task!*

No less vital is it to have information as to the resources of the country—the truck accommodation of every branch-line of railway, the transport animals procurable in any given district, the amount of provisions normally stored in any given village, the current prices of the necessaries of life; none of these points can safely be neglected. Again, it is necessary to know everything about the character of the civil population, especially of the leading men in the country as a whole and in every township, and about the internal political situation in

* See Appendix N, evidence of Major E. H. Hills.

general, so as to judge correctly what effect a crushing defeat in the field or a threatened move on the enemy's capital is likely to have upon his conduct of the war.

Lastly, it is absolutely essential to have the fullest and most detailed knowledge about one's prospective enemy's army. That knowledge implies far more than a roughly accurate estimate of the number of men and guns he can bring into the field. It presupposes a thorough knowledge of his military character, as revealed by a careful study of his past fighting history, of his present training, and of his military theories in so far as they can be ascertained by intimate acquaintance with prominent officers and with the military works most in vogue among them. It means a detailed knowledge of the particular qualities of every regiment in his army, and of the character, and even the physical health, of every senior officer who is likely to hold an important appointment in time of war. It must include, too, all that can possibly be discovered about his preparations for war and his intended plan of operations.

To collect all this information requires a very considerable number of agents working together for a great number of years. These agents must be men of expert knowledge and of the very keenest ability and insight. They must be picked out among the very ablest and most ambitious officers in the Army, reinforced, if necessary, for some tasks by civilians. The idea that most of the work of an Intelligence Department in a foreign country consists in buying secrets and corrupting underlings is an entirely mistaken one. These things do play some part, but a part entirely subordinate to the scientific and methodical study of all the factors that may come into action in the contingency of a particular war.

Again, it may take years for an agent to get to know a certain district, or to get into touch with really valuable sources of information. The foundations of a good intelligence must be laid down when the prospect of war is remote. To send out intelligence officers after a critical situation has arisen only shows that the staff at Headquarters has failed in its duty, and only serves to increase suspicion and precipitate the danger of war.

All the information collected on the spot must in its turn be sifted, compared, and edited by a large Intelligence Staff at Headquarters. When that is done it forms the basis on which, again, a large strategical staff will be continuously employed, building up and remodelling plans of campaigns for all conceivable contingencies.* The selecting and working up of all this vast mass of detail requires, not only industry, but the very highest qualities of insight and imagination. Only the theoretical and historical study of war in its broadest sense can keep those qualities alive, and an efficient staff college, a large historical department, and a scientific and experimental department, are all indispensable adjuncts to a well-organized General Staff. A separation of the educational department from the branch that deals with preparation for war, such as at present exists in our Army, is contrary to all sound principles.

The total number of officers employed on the General Staff of the German Army, exclusive of General Staff

* 'The conception, in my mind, of what the Intelligence Department ought to develop into is something very much larger than would be represented by any moderate increase.

'I should think the development of the Intelligence Department ought to be a gradual one; that it might reasonably be doubled now, but that the doubling would not be the eventual limit—that it ought still to go on increasing.'—4,980-4,982: Sir J. Ardagh.

officers attached to Army Corps and divisions, is nearly 300. Yet, when one thinks of it, the military problems Germany has to face are comparatively simple. Foremost in point of importance and probability is the problem of a war with France, or with Russia, or with both combined. More remote, yet not impossible, are armed intervention in case of an internal conflict in Austria, or an attempt to force Holland into the German Empire. These are the most important questions the German staff has to study. The armies of other countries—England, Italy, Turkey, Romania, Bulgaria, Japan—have an interest, and require studying only in so far as they may enter into the field as enemies or allies of the Powers with which Germany is most likely to come into direct contact on land. The problem is, moreover, simplified by the fact that the countries chiefly concerned are all admirably mapped, easy to visit and reside in, and can readily be studied by the help of enormous masses of literature and statistics freely available to anyone.

Our problems are infinitely more difficult and complex. For every conceivable war that Germany may have to be prepared for, we must be prepared for half a dozen—so scattered is our Empire, so multifarious are our interests. The armies we may put in the field or encounter may not be so large, but the regions we may have to operate in are far larger, and the problems they present far more difficult. Most of them, including great portions of our own Empire, are, for tactical purposes, almost unmapped. In many cases their populations, natural resources, and fighting powers are almost unknown. All the mass of information that civilized countries collect and publish of themselves has to be got

together from the very beginning. Every one of them requires a different kind of warfare and a special training. Our own forces, to take another point, are not homogeneous, but composed of every sort and kind of troops, subject to a dozen different independent authorities. A proper study of the strength and quality of the various military forces under the British Crown would, of itself, require quite a considerable staff of officers, both at Headquarters and conducting investigations all over the Empire. For all these reasons it is obvious that our Empire requires, relatively to the size of its armies, a far larger General Staff, and more especially a larger Intelligence Department, than any other.*

* 'But you are strongly of opinion that your staff requires strengthening?'—'Yes, the staff requires strengthening. It compares most unfavourably with the General Staff which does the same work, for example, in the German Army. I cannot give you the exact figures, because I could not get the paper which I drew up on the subject; but, so far as I remember, to do the same work which we do with 20 officers, they use, I think, in Berlin something like 150; and, similarly, in France the French War Office Staff, with the same duties, is very much larger than ours. And it is not as if the problems before them were in any degree more complicated than the problems before us, but the exact reverse, because we have an Empire so large and so exceedingly varied in its conditions that our defence schemes, mobilization schemes, and so on, are much more intricate than they are with a country like France or Germany.'—364: Sir W. Nicholson.

'We have not merely to deal with the possibility of mobilizing our Army for a European war, which is the essential and simple fact which is always before the minds of the great General Staff in all European States, but we have to think of the defence and the interests and possibilities of the whole of the British Empire all over the world. A great country like Germany, although it has colonies, has nothing like the enormous responsibility that is entailed upon us by our naval position—in the maintenance, for

But what are the actual facts? What were the circumstances in which we undertook the South African War? It had been evident ever since Lord Loch's visit to Pretoria in 1894 that serious trouble with the Transvaal was not impossible, and an ultimatum was actually delivered by Mr. Chamberlain to President Kruger over the Drifts question in the following year. Yet it was not till after the Raid that two or three officers at one time or another paid visits to the Republics, and that brief reports were made on the Boer forces, on the most important routes, and on the defensive requirements of one or two important points near the border, such as Stormberg and De Aar. When the crisis was already at its height, in the middle of 1899, eight or ten special service officers went out to the Cape. Equipped with sums of money with which no self-respecting commercial traveller would have dreamt of leaving Cape Town, and carefully shadowed in most cases by Boer agents, they travelled about collecting information and making hurried surveys. The work they did was excellent, judged by the standard of the opportunities at their disposal; it was ludicrously inadequate as a preparation for war.*

When war broke out it was soon discovered that,

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instance, of coaling-stations and defended ports abroad.'—4,984: SIR J. ARDAGH.

* 'I quite understand that you have to cover the whole world; but the proportion allocated to South African work during the three years preceding the war would be, as an outside estimate, about £2,000 a year?'—'Yes.'

'That is one-forty-seventh of the amount expended by the South African Republic annually during that period; and no doubt you are aware that the revenue of Great Britain is twenty-three times more than the Transvaal revenue was at that time?'—'Yes.'—5,131-5,132: SIR J. ARDAGH.

except for the portion of Northern Natal out of which we were driven in the first fortnight, the whole of South Africa was for tactical purposes unmapped. There was a great outcry in England when the public learnt that General Hart had gone astray at Colenso because the map marked drifts that did not exist, that Lord Methuen stumbled into Modder River Battle through ignorance of the course of the Riet River, that the officers who seized the summit of Spion Kop had no notion of the peculiar shape of that hill. Yet Spion Kop was but one among a thousand hills in Natal, and the drifts and windings of South African rivers are without number. How could the Intelligence Department have provided for these events except by a complete survey of South Africa? And how could a dozen officers map a country half as big as Europe in a few weeks? To be prepared for the South African War we should have had thirty or forty agents at least settled down to work in the country long before the cloud of war appeared on the horizon.

It was not the Intelligence Department that was to blame, but the Government, and, above all, the nation, that, in its ignorance and conceit, thought it could wage wars without troubling to prepare for them.* Our

* 'Did you ever put forward an estimate for a grant—an increased grant—from the Treasury here for the purposes of your department in the matter of mapping in South Africa?'—'I put forward an official application to the War Office, but it received so much cold water from the financial point of view that it came to nothing. The end of my proposal of £18,000 a year for ten years was an offer of £100.'—5,011: SIR J. ARDAGH.

'Do you see any reason why, two years before the declaration of war, instructions should not have been given to prepare sketch maps of the main parts of what eventually became the theatre of war?'—'No'

strategical preparation for the war was of a piece with our information. One may well ask what principles decided the strength and composition of the force that was to be sent out. One fact, at least, is clear, that the strength of the force which was to hold the Boers in check in Natal for three months, pending the arrival of the Army Corps, was based, not on any careful study of the Boer power, but simply on a rough estimate framed by General Symons. What was to be done if the force proved insufficient seems never to have been contemplated. The whole plan of campaign was of the sort that suggests itself over the wine and the walnuts. An airy, self-confident sketchiness is written all over it.

Well, we received our lesson. That was four years ago; time enough for our rulers to have made good use of it. For, apart from a general reorganization, the enlargement of the existing Intelligence Department would in no way have interfered with the task of carrying on the war. But nothing has been done—nothing, at least, that is worth mentioning. A perusal of the list of officers attached to the present Mobilization and Intelligence Department will show how shamefully this all-important branch of the service has been starved and neglected.*

'I can only say that when I went to the Intelligence Division there seemed to be a rooted idea that there was no use asking for money to survey our Colonies.'—817, 861: LIEUTENANT-COLONEL S. GRANT.

* 'Last year I put forward a proposal for an increase to the staff of my department, which is at present inadequate. That proposal was supported by the Commander-in-Chief and concurred in by the Secretary of State for War, but on financial grounds it was negatived. I put that as a very moderate proposal.'—276: SIR W. G. NICHOLSON.

It may, perhaps, not be unprofitable to compare in detail our present establishment, as shown in that list, with our probable requirements. For the sake of example, let us take a single 'section' of the Intelligence Division. Section I. 2 (D) includes in its scope Russia, India, Afghanistan, Burma, Siam, Aden, Japan, China, Central Asia, Persia, Maskat, Sokotra—in other words, the whole of Asia, except Turkey in Asia and French Indo-China, but including Russia in Europe. Roughly speaking, these countries cover about half the land surface of the earth, and comprehend two-thirds of its inhabitants. They include the greater, and by far the most important, half of what in a previous chapter has been called the strategic front of our military position.

What would be a fair allowance of officers of the Intelligence Division to grapple with so terrific a task, keeping in mind that the greater part of this section is practically unmapped, some of it unexplored, and a great deal of it explorable only at the greatest risk? Let us take the items separately. The Russian Empire can fairly be described as our most formidable and also most probable military adversary. Its area is nearly as great as that of our own Empire, and, though the greater part of it will never be the scene of the operations of a British Army, still, even those portions of it that are not

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'Your representation is that your office is undermanned?'—'Very much so.'

'There are very many documents to peruse. In Germany, for instance, military books are constantly being published, and we receive sometimes 150 of these a year that ought to be gone into, but it is quite impossible to do this.'—698 - 699: LIEUTENANT-COLONEL ROBERTSON.

more unlikely to be traversed by our troops than was the Transvaal ten years ago are two or three times as large as South Africa, and not nearly so fully mapped. A score of agents perpetually engaged in secretly surveying Transcaucasia, Russian Central Asia, and Eastern Siberia would be no excessive allowance. The study of Russia's natural resources, of her internal political situation, of her army organization, of her transport and mobilization arrangements, of her strategical plans, would require twice as many. Nor would twenty officers at home, continually working upon the Russian problem, be more than are necessary to do justice to the subject.

India and Burma are part of our own possessions, and the bulk of their local intelligence work can be done by the Indian Army. At the same time, as the Indian Army is an independent organization, it is very necessary that the Central Intelligence in London should have its own means of forming its estimate of the military value of our Indian forces,* and in any case a large number of officers will be required to work up the information at home. Here, again, twenty would not be an overestimate. Afghanistan and Persia are the most probable areas of great operations which we have to prepare for. They are in every respect almost unknown, and present extraordinary difficulties to the movement of troops. Fifty or sixty agents working locally and a section of thirty officers at home might do a good deal to prepare us for any eventuality. China,

* 'I think that the whole discussion rather shows the necessity for full information regarding India being available at the War Office.'

'It was not so before the war?'—'It was not so before the war.' —21,009-21,010: Sir E. Collen.

too, is a great and complex problem, and might require almost as large a staff to deal with it as the regions last mentioned. Siam is a smaller matter, a case for three or four officers at home and a similar number on the spot. Aden, Maskat, and Sokotra require even less.

Japan deserves an almost more careful study than any of the others. By our recent alliance we have secured, for certain contingencies, the co-operation of an army of some 400,000 men, which, in point of courage, intelligence, and equipment, would seem, to judge by the last campaign in China, to be comparable to that of any European Power. To acquire the most exact and intimate knowledge of every detail of that army, of its officers and men, of its organization and plans, would naturally be the very first duty of our military authorities. Then, if the contingency arises for which the alliance was made, we shall know exactly what degree of help we can expect from our allies, and also help them with advice as to the character of the enemy they may have to encounter. And if joint operations on the mainland of Asia are contemplated it is absolutely essential that the two forces should thoroughly understand each other. Every British staff, and even individual regiments, ought in such a case to include officers who could not only speak Japanese, but should be personally acquainted with all the more prominent officers in the allied force. Every transport officer should know how many Japanese rations could, at a pinch, be carried by our transport, or how many of our rations could be carried by the Japanese. In combined operations it is things of this sort that save serious misunderstandings and eventual failure. Therefore, besides

the ordinary Intelligence Staff at work on the problem of the Japanese Army, say a dozen officers at home and twenty in Japan, we should always have some fifty or more officers at a time in Japan, attached, if possible, to the Japanese forces, and generally making themselves acquainted with the language and the people.*

In all, this section I. 2 (D) would require to deal with it adequately over 100 officers in London, and about twice that number of officers and agents continually working abroad. *The actual strength of the section in London is four officers.* Including the military attachés at St. Petersburg, Teheran, Peking, and Tokio, it may be double that number abroad. That is how we prepare for war nearly four years after Colenso and Spion Kop.

The section selected is the strongest in the Intelligence Division. Two such petty Powers as Germany and the United States, with their possessions and dependencies, together with the Netherlands, Denmark, Sweden, and Norway, are looked after by two officers. Austria-Hungary, Greece, Montenegro, Servia, Rumania, Bulgaria, the Ottoman Empire, Crete, Egypt, the Anglo-Egyptian sphere, the Congo Free State, Morocco, Abyssinia, Liberia, and the portions of Africa under native rule but within the British sphere, a section hardly less important than the first one discussed, are dealt with by three officers. France, Italy, Spain, and Portugal, with all their possessions, together with Belgium, Mexico, and all Central and South America, are considered a reasonable task for two officers. Two

* 'I only know two officers who know anything of the Japanese Army whatever, or who ever saw them. It would be a very good thing if, say, you sent a hundred officers to Japan.'—14,641 : SIR A. HUNTER.

officers, lastly, are supposed to do justice to such an unconsidered trifle as the British Empire.

In all, there are nineteen officers in the Intelligence Division, less than one-tenth of what would be a *minimum* for effective preparation. Provision for the training of officers for intelligence work in the field there is none, though field intelligence, under the conditions of modern warfare, is far more important than it ever was before.* In future wars an intelligence staff with field intelligence officers and a corps of highly-trained scouts of the Burnham type will be absolutely essential, and something ought to be done to create it without delay.

Eleven officers are comprised in the Mobilization Division. Four of them are concerned with the organization and mobilization of the Regular and Auxiliary forces, the defence of the United Kingdom, tactical examination of defence schemes, war establishments, and field service manuals. Three look after the reconnaissance revision of the south-eastern zone of the defence of England, and another three after the eastern

* 'And, finally, you say the most important corps is the Intelligence Corps?'—'That is where we suffered most of all.

'In the beginning of the war we never had any guides; we never knew exactly where we were.

'The Intelligence officer was a very important man; he was *the* man.'—17,658-17,659, 17,665: GENERAL C. E. KNOX.

'Then, in what way is the Intelligence Department in the field organized?'—'Staff officers are selected and appointed to perform the duties of field intelligence.'

'But quite apart from your office?'—'Quite apart from my office.'

'And there is no trained Intelligence branch of staff officers in the British Army for service in the field?'—'There is none.'—338-339, 379: SIR W. G. NICHOLSON.

zone. Scotland, Ireland, and Western and Northern England, apparently, require no defence. This department is probably also only a fraction of the strength it ought to be.* A historical department does not exist at all.† Science and inventions are equally unprovided for. I had almost forgotten the most important department of all, the Imperial Strategical Department. This is under the Intelligence Division, and its title is

* 'In the German General Staff there are forty-eight officers doing the work that is done by Colonel Lake's mobilization division and my subdivision, and yet the whole of our permanent staff amounts altogether only to eight officers.'—564: COLONEL ALTHAM.

† After much delay and haggling, a moderate staff for the official history of the South African War has at last been granted to Sir F. Maurice, and the hopeful may perhaps see in this the nucleus of a future historical section. A good instance of the incredible parsimony of the authorities with regard to all that concerns knowledge is their recent refusal to sanction an expenditure of £300 for the publication of a most important historical report on the working of the railway system during the war. Had the railway department come to grief enough to attract public attention, thousands would have been spent freely on a Special Commission. As it is, the lessons of the war with regard to a department involving millions of expenditure and vital to the whole success of the campaign are not thought worth £300!

Another typical instance is given by Sir W. Nicholson (18,280-18,283): 'I may say that in one case I proposed that the question of the Colonial forces used in South Africa—their organization, equipment, and so on—should be considered, and a scheme drawn up for future use, but owing to financial objections the proposal was negatived.'

'Would there be much financial difficulty in simply drawing up a scheme?'—'It would involve the employment of a capable officer for about six months, I suppose.'

'And any large staff with him?'—'No; no staff.'

'It would not cost £1,000?'—'It would cost much less than that.'

Section I. 1 (A). Its duties are well summed up in the official list. They comprise the military defence of the Empire, including the preparation and maintenance of plans of offensive and defensive operations (other than within the United Kingdom), the strategical consideration of defence schemes abroad, and the strategical distribution of the military forces of the Empire—in other words, our whole Imperial military policy. There is enough work there to tax the powers of 100 able men. *The department consists of one man!*

Thirty millions a year spent on our Army, not counting Indian and Colonial forces, and a strategical department consisting of one officer! Do we deserve to exist as an Empire? The whole thing seems almost inexplicable. The best explanation I can give is that the development of our Army has been influenced less by consideration of its real needs than by the thought of what would look effective when set forth to a House of Commons and a public entirely ignorant of military matters. So and so many thousand men in red coats, so many guns, so much cordite, so many substantial barracks, are things that the ordinary Englishman understands. He pays cheerfully for them, believing he has got 'something for his money.' Money spent on mapping Abyssinia or Tibet seems to him sheer waste, a speculation on events that will probably never happen. He will not realize that in any case all the money that is spent on an army or a navy is a pure speculation, a species of insurance or betting upon events that are entirely uncertain.

As a matter of fact, money spent on education, organization, and information is the least speculative form of military expenditure. The knowledge acquired

to-day, whether of the theory of war or of the physical features of foreign countries, will be useful thirty years hence, and cannot be improvised in a moment. The soldiers we pay and train to-day will have left the service before half that period is out; our guns, rifles, and ammunition will be completely out of date. If we must save money, it is on the more speculative portion of our expenditure—namely, the size of our standing establishment—that we must retrench. We cannot afford to keep up an Army larger than is sufficient to cope with the more probable emergencies of the next few years. But our Imperial Staff and our information ought to be fully adequate to the very greatest war we might ever possibly wage in any conceivable circumstances. If an adequate staff costs half a million, or even a million, and our expenditure is rigidly fixed, the only alternative is to cut down the number of our troops till the all-important need is satisfied. And until the Government satisfies that need it will not, as far as military policy is concerned, deserve the confidence either of the people of these islands or of the Britains beyond the seas.

CHAPTER IX

THE PROBLEM OF THE WAR OFFICE

THE absence of a General Staff and of a proper staff system, distinct from the executive administration of our Army, was undoubtedly the principal cause of our failure to take adequate measures to prepare for the war in South Africa, or to conduct the war with better success. But can anyone maintain that, apart from this one defect, the executive administration of the Army was, or is, in itself satisfactory? I think not; and if more evidence to that effect were wanted beyond what has long been patent to the most superficial observer, the Royal Commissioners have now furnished the public with revelations sufficient to appal even the most optimistic. The truth is that the administration of our Army is thoroughly defective, and that only the most drastic changes can make it sound. There is a Turkish proverb which says that 'Fish begins to stink at the head.' And if we wish to find the clue to the causes of our military inefficiency we must go to the War Office. The overwork in matters of detail, the confusion, the lack of individual responsibility, which characterize that office are all symptomatic of the evils from which our military administration suffers, and are to no small extent the cause of those evils. If only the state of affairs

at the War Office can be remedied, then we can begin to hope that the reform of the Army as a whole is not far off.

The secret of efficient administrative organization is summed up in two things: the scientific division of the work and the due distribution of the responsibility. If the work is divided on false principles, if subjects that in practice naturally go together and closely affect each other are put in different departments, or incongruous subjects, requiring entirely different administrative qualities and methods, are thrown together, the inevitable result is in the one case endless cross-references, inter-departmental friction and weakening of responsibility, and in the other inefficient management or total neglect of important matters. If responsibility is not clearly defined, the natural instinct of the superior will continually lead him to interfere directly in the work of his subordinates instead of judging it by its result; the natural instinct of the subordinate will lead him to disclaim responsibility and to do nothing without direct orders. The superior in such a case will be overwhelmed with the details of work that could be done equally well by subordinates, to the neglect of his own proper duties; the subordinate is alternately idle and overworked, ceases to think how the business of his department might be improved, acquiesces in what he knows mistaken, and is only concerned with carrying on his duties sufficiently well not to get into trouble. Deficiency in one respect begets deficiency in the other. Responsibility cannot be fixed if the work is badly divided, becauses the disputes and cross-references between the departments continually call for the intervention of the superior. Conversely, if the superior insists on supervising and controlling his

subordinates' work himself, he will care very little how the work is apportioned among them.

But however scientifically divided the work, there will always be a residue of questions—generally the most important of all—which affect more than one department, and therefore call for some central arbiter. However justly distributed the responsibility, there must be someone from whom, in all important matters, the original initiative must come, on whom the ultimate responsibility for the well-being of the whole must rest. That final authority can either be a single man, as in the case of an absolute monarch, or a general in the field, or the head of a private business, or a number of men acting as one corporate authority, as, for instance, the Cabinet in a constitutional country, or the Admiralty Board, or the directors of a commercial company. Each system has its advantages. Quickness of decision, secrecy, and boldness in execution are the chief characteristics of successful one-man rule. Sound deliberation, forethought, and continuity of policy are, as a rule, best obtained by discussion in council. In either case, it is essential that there should be only one final authority, and that its position and powers should be clearly defined.

Keeping the above general points in view, we can now examine the organization of the War Office. First, as regards the division of work. The most important branch of all, the Scientific, or Policy Department, exists, as the preceding chapters have shown, only in the most rudimentary state as one of the subordinate branches of the Commander-in-Chief's Department. One of the most important subjects connected with policy and staff work—namely, education—has

nothing to do with it. Till recently education was under the Military Secretary, an officer whose peculiar duties are interviewing, the selection of names for mention in despatches, and the control of appointments and promotions. The only reason for this extraordinary combination of functions was that a recent Military Secretary happened also to have been a University man. At present education is a department by itself, but whether it is under the Military Secretary or the Adjutant-General, or is no man's child, is a matter I have been quite unable to discover. Among the duties of the Education Department are apparently, judging by this year's experience, the planning and conduct of manœuvres. Why this most important function of General Staff work should be relegated to officers who have nothing to do with the plans for real war, or with the utilization of manœuvre experiences, either as regards tactical lessons or the selection of individuals for promotion, is a matter for which the only explanation I can hazard is that it was no one's business in particular to look after manœuvres, and that General Hildyard and his staff were supposed to be less overworked at the moment than General Nicholson, the head of our rudimentary General Staff. Again, the officers who do General Staff duties with the army corps and divisions are now supposed to belong to the Quartermaster-General's Department. If the reader asks why, I can only answer that once upon a time the Quartermaster-General's work included General Staff work. It does, in fact, at this moment still include one isolated fragment of it, namely, the distribution and moving of troops; but the Quartermaster-General's chief duties are connected with Commissariat, and his

real subordinates are the officers of the Army Service Corps. Largest of all the departments, in respect of the number of its subordinate branches and the variety of subjects it embraces, is the Adjutant-General's Department. Primarily the department responsible for administration and discipline, its present functions really represent little more than the personal idiosyncrasies and the love of direct control over all that interested them which possessed Lord Wolseley and Sir R. Buller when they filled that office. The truth is simply this, that the War Office has no real organization. It has grown just anyhow, and the different departments are nothing but the petrified moulds of past haphazard additions or alterations. There is no more plan or principle in it than there is in the internal structure of the rabbit-warren in Pall Mall which it inhabits.

Real delegation of responsibility in an office whose work is distributed in so haphazard a fashion would be almost impossible, even if it were not already a tradition deeply ingrained in the whole Army, and more deeply ingrained in the War Office than anywhere else, that the chief task of each rank is not the doing of the work of that rank, but the controlling by a series of orders of the work of the ranks below. There is no detail of Army administration so trivial but that it comes to the War Office; no War Office decision so trivial but that it goes to the heads of departments. If that were all, that would be bad enough. But the authority and work even of the great departments are so badly defined that an endless series of decisions of the most subordinate character come before the Commander-in-Chief and the Secretary of State.* And this brings us to what is,

* See Appendix O, evidence of Lord Roberts.

perhaps more than anything else, the root of all the mischief: the lack of co-ordination between the departments and the ill-defined status of the ultimate authority. That is the point at which reform can be effected from the outside, and from the outside alone; and therefore in a work like the present, whose object is to concentrate public interest on the question of Army reform, it is the one point on which full discussion and definite suggestions are most required.

We need not, for our present purpose, go back further in the history of this subject than the year 1888, when the constitution of the War Office was reorganized by an Order in Council. The whole administration was centred in the Commander-in-Chief, who was supreme over all the departments and responsible for everything. The heads of the departments were supposed, on the analogy of a command in the field, to be staff officers of the Commander-in-Chief. The arrangement, quite apart from the unscientific division of the departments, was unsatisfactory in several respects. In the first place, the analogy between command in the field and the office administration of a complicated military system is both false and misleading. The two things are absolutely different, and require absolutely different qualities and a different organization. Command in the field must be the affair of one man, not because his military judgment is necessarily better than that of a council, but because in the field soundness of judgment is a less important factor in success than imaginative insight, instant decision, and unconquerable will. A general must act boldly and confidently on insufficient information; he must concentrate all his thought on his immediate object—namely, victory. He cannot wait for fuller knowledge,

nor can he take into consideration all the remoter consequences of his action. Rapidity and resolution are the essentials for action in the field, and to secure them everything must be concentrated in a single mind and depend on a single will.

But in administration the conditions are reversed. The situations are more complex, and require, and at the same time allow of, more careful study. An alteration in the distribution of troops desirable for strategical reasons may involve changes in the financing, the recruiting, and the training of the Army, and all these questions must be fully threshed out before a single step is taken. Only the fullest and freest discussion among experts conscious of their responsibility, and unfettered by any considerations of deference to a military superior, can in such a case lead to a satisfactory result. Again, if a policy already adopted appears doubtful, it may even be wise to mark time pending further investigation—a step which is the most fatal of all steps a general can take in the field. In fact, in administration, soundness of judgment, due deliberation, and continuity of policy are more important than rapidity of decision, and these qualities are, as a rule, better secured by a small council or board than by a single commander.

The objections to administration by a Commander-in-Chief might not, however, in themselves be overwhelming if the Commander-in-Chief really were absolute. But such absolute power can, under our constitution, never be given to the Commander-in-Chief. He must himself be subordinate to the civil Government, and under the scheme of 1888 was made directly subordinate to a civilian Secretary of State. The latter was the real head of the Army, and the Commander-in-Chief was

merely a buffer interposed between the Secretary of State and the organization for which he was responsible —a connecting-pipe through which all communications from the departments to the Secretary of State had to flow, and in which they became confused and congested. The system was destructive alike of administrative efficiency and of Parliamentary control.

It was this system that the Hartington Commission was appointed to investigate, and its recommendations, published in 1891, were but the logical conclusions from the considerations given above. Those recommendations included, first and foremost, the abolition of the Commander-in-Chief and the government of the Army by the heads of departments, who, like the Naval Lords at the Admiralty, should be each directly responsible to the Secretary of State.* Among these departments the leading place was to belong to the Chief of the Staff's or Policy Department. The actual command and inspection of the troops in Great Britain was to be taken out of the War Office and assigned to a 'General Officer Commanding the Forces in Great Britain.' Had these recommendations only been adopted in 1891, our Army might long ago have attained to a high level of efficiency, and the South African War might well have been the first great triumph of the new organization. Unfortunately, they fell into evil hands. The first Secretary of State who succeeded—himself one of the members of the Commission—was Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, a convinced believer in the policy of 'muddling through,' who, as I have mentioned already, threw the whole weight of his authority against the creation of a Policy Department as not only unnecessary, but likely to be a 'danger to our

* See Appendix P.

best interests,' because it might tempt the Government to bring about wars which inquiry showed to be possible. If it is worth while imputing the blame for our failures in South Africa to individuals, the heaviest share ought certainly to be borne by the Secretary of State who deliberately wrecked the one measure which might have insured us efficient preparation. But the real blame lies, not with the individuals, who no doubt acted to the best of their abilities, but with the whole system, whereby the most important departments of our national life are, to suit the exigencies of party politics, entrusted to men of exceptional stupidity.

If stupidity wrecked the one great recommendation of the Hartington Commission, it was left for feebleness to wreck the other. By the Order in Council of 1895 a pretence was made of embodying the recommendations of the Commission as regards the direct responsibility of heads of departments while still retaining the position of Commander-in-Chief. Some of the departments were made directly responsible to the Secretary of State, but under the 'supervision' of the Commander-in-Chief; others were placed under the latter's direct control.*

* 'You mention in the *précis* of your evidence the position which the department of the Adjutant-General held at that time. Will you state what it was?'—'The position at the outbreak of the war was that defined by the Order in Council of 1895, which put the heads of the great departments in a position of quasi-independence, by giving them the power, at the option of the Secretary of State, of dealing directly with him; but that power could not be exercised by the Adjutant-General himself unless he was so instructed by the Secretary of State or by the Commander-in-Chief. In fact, it did not become operative except with the assent of those two people.'

'Was there not a War Office Council at that time?'—'Yes.'

'And you were a member of that Council?'—'Yes.'

An arrangement more conducive to confusion, misunderstanding, congestion of work, and general inefficiency it would be difficult to imagine. The position of a Commander-in-Chief thus sandwiched into the middle of an administrative machine could not be otherwise than intolerable.* The whole of Lord Wolseley's tenure of the office was a desperate struggle to set at naught the Order of 1895, and to maintain the older centralization in the Commander-in-Chief. The result was the utter chaos which the investigations of the War Commission have made public, and that chaos is now worse than it ever was before.

The remedy is plain enough. The main lines of it were laid down by the Hartington Commission. They have been again set forth in the most convincing fashion in the memorandum appended by Lord Esher to the report of the last Commission, urging the abolition of the Commander-in-Chief and the substitution of a board composed of the heads of departments on the lines of the Admiralty Board.† The administrative merits of the board system, as against command by a single indi-

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'But you had no independent position there?'—'Absolutely none.'

'Nothing could be done except by the previous sanction of the Secretary of State at that time?'—'No; I had no responsibility on any one point, as might be inferred if you read only the instructions laid down for the Adjutant-General, without reading the paragraph which applies to the Commander-in-Chief.'—4,072-4,076: SIR E. WOOD.

* 'I do not know whom the Secretary of State consults. All I know is that the Commander-in-Chief's recommendations are overruled; but I cannot tell who suggests it, or whether the Secretary of State consults the Cabinet, his secretary, or anybody else.'—4,771: GENERAL KELLY-KENNY.

† See Appendix A.

vidual, have already been indicated. But the board system is preferable, not only because it can administer more effectively, but also because the opinions or demands of a board carry greater weight outside of its own organization. This is partly due to the belief that its collective judgment is safer than that of any individual, and partly to the fact that in its relations with the Cabinet it acts as one body of men dealing on a more or less equal footing with another body, through the medium of one of its members. The First Lord of the Admiralty stands in the Cabinet, in practice, if not in strict theory, as the representative of a semi-independent power, the Admiralty Board, and has in consequence a stronger position than the Secretary of State for War, who represents no one, and can only urge the suggestions of his own subordinates. And not only has a Minister greater power as the representative of a strong collective opinion, but the non-political members of a board can exercise far greater pressure by the threat of collective resignation than can ever be exercised by a subordinate Commander-in-Chief. That this power has been most usefully exercised within recent years by the Naval Lords is an open secret. That it should have been used by Lord Wolseley has been frequently suggested by those who have not realized the weakness of the position of the military heads of the War Office under the present system.

That is to say, the board system secures an adequate representation of expert opinion, while at the same time keeping it in close touch with the ultimate authority, which must always be the civil power. The present system has proved a lamentable failure in that respect, and the only alternative suggestion that could be made

in order to secure that object—namely, the appointment of a military Secretary of State—is open to so many serious objections as to be really out of the question. For unless the military Secretary of State is completely and thoroughly in touch with the Cabinet his power of carrying through his recommendations would be even less than if he urged them through the medium of a civilian Minister. On the other hand, it would be almost impossible to keep him in really close touch with the Cabinet without letting him become practically a party politician. In that case, even if he did not neglect his military duties, he could hardly continue in office with a change of Government. But nothing could be worse than that the fluctuations of politics should be allowed to interfere with the continuity of military administration. Under the board system, the board, as a body, would remain even if the political members changed. Its policy would tend to be constant, and to impose itself on successive Secretaries of State instead of being imposed by them. It would be less affected by the individual ability of particular Secretaries of State, a considerable advantage in a country where administrative efficiency or expert knowledge are among the very last things usually taken into account in the assignment of the great administrative departments. The board system, then, is not only the best instrument of administration in the abstract, but the one best suited to our peculiar political institutions.

What, then, are the objections to the adoption of the board system, as established at the Admiralty, in a reorganized War Office? The first is the one urged by Mr. Brodrick in his evidence before the Commission—namely, that the whole tradition of the Army is based

on loyalty to a personal chief, and that that loyalty cannot be transferred either to a civilian Secretary of State or to a board. That the Army should be inspired by loyalty to a supreme head is certainly desirable. But that supreme head exists already in the person of the Monarch. The soldier is a soldier of the King, he wears the King's uniform, and it is for King and country, and not for a Commander-in-Chief at the War Office, that he is ready to give his life. The existence of a separate Commander-in-Chief must tend to weaken rather than to concentrate military loyalty. And there is another consideration with regard to loyalty, on which our whole system of constitutional monarchy is based. And this is that the person who is the object of loyalty must not be concerned in the details of administration, and reap the unpopularity of particular administrative measures. Under the present system the Commander-in-Chief, so far from being the object of loyal regard throughout the Army, is associated with all the unpopular measures and with all the defects of the organization with which he is connected. It is almost impossible for any soldier, however distinguished, to command the unqualified loyalty of the whole Army even before he enters the War Office; it is still less possible for him to command it when once he has entered. To give the King the title of Commander-in-Chief is the natural and logical outcome of our constitutional system.

But it is more than that: it is essential to the military unity of the Empire. Only a portion of the forces of the Crown are under the British War Office, and there is not the slightest reason to suppose that either India or the self-governing Colonies will ever

allow their military organizations to be controlled from Pall Mall. What loyalty does the Canadian or Australian soldier feel for a British Commander-in-Chief, subject to the Parliament of the United Kingdom? But, whether Australian, Indian, or English, every soldier in the Empire is a soldier of the King. By making the King Commander-in-Chief he becomes Commander-in-Chief not only in the United Kingdom, but in every part of the Empire. The armies of the Empire will be thus not only animated by a common sentiment of loyalty, but put on an equal footing with each other.

I do not, of course, mean to suggest that any of the executive or administrative functions of the present Commander-in-Chief should be transferred to the Crown. Nothing could be more destructive of all efficiency than the interference of the Monarch or of his personal surroundings in the details of Army administration, and nothing, in a country like ours, could well be more injurious to the position of the Monarchy than even the suspicion of such interference. The administrative and executive duties of the present Commander-in-Chief must be completely merged in the members of the Army Board, whose control over the Army must, under Parliament, be absolute. All I maintain is that the sentiment of personal loyalty which is supposed to be bound up with the existence of a Commander-in-Chief can find its best expression, not in an artificial secondary focus of loyalty, but in the soldier's natural and constitutional loyalty to his Sovereign and to the Imperial idea which the Sovereign personifies.

A more weighty objection, at any rate at first sight, is directed, not against the abolition of the Commander-in-Chief, but against the board system as contrasted with

a system under which the Secretary of State would be absolute and would consult separately with his subordinates. It is feared by some that the full development of a General Staff, or Policy Department, would be hampered by a board, on which the other heads of departments would, by natural jealousy, tend to combine against the proposals of the Chief of the Staff and outvote him. The remedy suggested is that the Chief of the Staff should be the Secretary of State's principal adviser, whom the Secretary of State should follow even against the opinion of the other heads of departments. In this way, it is argued, the supremacy of war considerations over the convenience of peace administration would be best upheld. But, acknowledging the desirability of the end, I am inclined to doubt whether the suggested means are really the most effective for bringing it about. It must be remembered, in the first place, that the big questions of policy do seriously affect the other departments of Army administration, and that in some cases a strategically desirable policy might be administratively inconvenient or even impossible. If the Chief of the Staff demands a certain measure, the Secretary of State must consult the other departmental chiefs with regard to its execution. One of these may declare the measure to be destructive to the whole administration of his department, and impossible. Whom is the Secretary of State to follow? However strong the wording of the Order in Council with regard to the Chief of the Staff's position, the decision must rest with the Secretary of State, and, as a non-expert, the chances are that administrative peace considerations will weigh with him more than considerations of strategy.

On a board the Chief of the Staff can appeal to other

soldiers, who are not likely to be all administratively interested against his proposals. He can refute *primâ-facie* military objections with military reasons. In fact, he can state his case far more effectively than when he only knows at second hand what are the objections raised against him. If he persuades the Board, the Secretary of State will have a far stronger case to bring before the Cabinet than if he can only say that he is urging the views of his Chief of the Staff against the protests of some of the other departments. If not, the Secretary of State and Chief of the Staff can still urge their views on the Imperial Council of Defence, and through the Council may, in the last resort, persuade the Cabinet to override the Army Board. In any case, the reasons for the decision finally taken will be clearer than upon any system under which the professional advisers of the Crown can give no collective opinion* while their differences are exploited, as they have hitherto been, by the politicians. Under a constitutional system like our own, the expert military adviser of the Government can, as a rule, only hope to see his advice carried out if he can reinforce it by first securing the concur-

* 'I think one of the great difficulties at the War Office is in all keeping in touch with each other; I have always found that one of the difficulties. This Army Board, while war was going on, was the most invaluable thing that ever was. We each of us made our report and asked our points, and got the most valuable interchange of opinion possible between us.

'At the Army Board we were a body, at which each one brought forward his own proposals, and everybody gave his opinion on those proposals, and then the Board decided. It was not the Commander-in-Chief, as the head, who decided, but the Board decided. Of course, the Commander-in-Chief, if he chose, could absolutely veto something or other, but he never did.'—1,821, 1,825: GENERAL SIR H. BRACKENBURY.

rence of a body of professional and political opinion. Such a body of opinion would be provided by a duly constituted Army Board, and the conclusion I draw is that, so far from being prejudicial to the proper development and authority of the General Staff, the board system is not only compatible with it, but is eminently desirable for that reason alone, that it will strengthen the position of the General Staff in its dealings with the civil Government.

The fact is that some of the objection to the board system entertained by thinking soldiers is due to the absence of an adequate Policy Department at the Admiralty, and to a suspicion that the Admiralty, however high its reputation, has for nearly a century had no opportunity for bringing that reputation to a serious test. But the lack of a proper 'Brain of the Navy' is in no way due to the board system, but simply to the fact that the vital importance of the brain function in administration has not yet sufficiently forced itself upon the attention of our politicians and administrators. Many of the defects of the Admiralty in the past and in the present are traceable to that deficiency, but those defects have nothing to do with the board system. And, untried though the Admiralty is, there is no one who is acquainted with the two offices who will dispute that it is infinitely better administered than the War Office is now or than it was on the eve of its great trial in 1899. In any case the main argument for the introduction of the board system into the War Office is founded, not on the success of the Admiralty, but on the general considerations of administrative efficiency and adaptability to our constitutional system which have been given above.

How, then, is the proposed Army Board to be constituted? There are two essential points that must be kept in view in framing any scheme. First, the number of members must be limited, to secure effective and thorough discussion. Secondly, they must be divided in accordance with the principal functions of Army administration in peace or war. For if important functions are not directly represented on the Board, or are represented by a chief who already has too many departments to supervise, they are bound to be neglected.

What are the principal functions of Army administration in peace and war? In the first place, naturally, comes the conduct of the operations of war and the planning and preparing for them in time of peace. This is by far the most important function, though it is the one that is most easily neglected in times of peace, especially in an army, like our own, whose peace administration is difficult and complicated. Secondly, in all countries that have a standing army, comes the maintenance of that army in a state of efficiency. Recruits have to be enlisted and drilled. Discipline must be maintained. Professional keenness must be kept up by a system of promotions and rewards. And in connection with all these matters an enormous number of administrative orders have to be given. In the next place come a variety of functions, each dealing with some subsidiary aspect of army administration. An army requires arms and ammunition, fortresses, barracks, furniture, horses, waggons, saddlery and harness, clothes, food, and medicine. Fourthly, an army must be financed so that the greatest amount of efficiency may be secured with the money available. And, lastly, its general

position in the State has to be defined, and the relation of military preparation to general policy continually adjusted.

This last function is pre-eminently that of the Secretary of State. He represents the Army in the Cabinet, and, conversely, on the War Office Board he represents the national interest and national policy. Whatever the exact wording of the Order in Council constituting the Board, he is the person whom Parliament holds primarily responsible, and he will therefore have to exercise a general supervision over the several departments, just as his naval colleague does at the Admiralty. He will take the chair at the meetings of the Board, and in his absence his place will be taken by the political Under-Secretary. The latter would act as the Secretary of State's understudy on the Board as in Parliament. The fourth function, that of finance, will, in a constitutional country where the control of the national expenditure is in the hands of Parliament, also best be placed in the hands of a civilian and Member of Parliament, who can justify the details of military expenditure to the nation's representatives, as well as secure the efficient distribution of the sums which the Cabinet has decided to allot to military preparation. These three would represent the civil and political element on the Board, for the Permanent Under-Secretary, who would act as Secretary of the Board and see to the routine of its business, would not be a voting member.

There remain the military functions. Of these, the first two must each be represented on the Board by a separate officer. The different functions in the third group are more than any one person could possibly be

responsible for. On the other hand, it would be undesirable to have each of them represented by a separate head, for fear of making the Board too large and of swamping the representatives of the more important functions by their votes. But they can be divided roughly into two groups, one dealing mainly with purchasable things, and the other supplying arms and buildings, in which the element of construction or skilled manufacture plays the principal part.

To come to actual details. The first military member of the Board, or First Army Lord, would be the officer responsible for the preparation and conduct of war. The duties of his department would be those of the General Staff in continental armies. He might be called Chief of the Staff, as was recommended by the Hartington Commission, or, in accordance with the historical tradition upheld in the British Army till 1888, and still maintained in India, he might be given the title of Quartermaster-General. He should have under him intelligence, mobilization and strategy, education, the theory of training, and the framing of drill-books and field service regulations, and his department should include historical and scientific sections. He would have practically no executive functions in peace beyond those necessary for administering his own department at Headquarters. On the other hand, he would be responsible for all operations of war, small or great —including the mimic warfare of manœuvres—and all orders to officers commanding at the scene of war would go through his department. The majority of the questions which are referred home during a campaign would be settled by him directly, and only the very largest questions of general policy would require re-

ference to the Army Board or the Council of Defence. Officers trained in his department and recommended by him would fulfil duties analogous to his own on the staffs of Army Corps districts or divisions in peace, and on the staffs of armies in the field, but would be directly responsible to their own Generals.

The second military member would be responsible for the recruiting and enlisting of the Army, for the maintenance of discipline, for the carrying out of the routine of training, for promotions and rewards, for the movement of troops, and for all administrative orders. His duties would combine the greater part of the present duties of the Adjutant-General's branch, with some of the duties now devolving on the Commander-in-Chief, including more especially those which are at present assigned to the Military Secretary, an office which would be abolished with the abolition of the Commander-in-Chief. He might be called the Adjutant-General.

The third military member would have under him supplies and transport, clothing, equipment, and all ordnance stores, and the medical, veterinary, and remount departments. If the title of Quartermaster-General is kept for the first military member, the title of Commissary-General might be revived for this officer.

The fourth military member would supervise the construction of fortifications, barracks, and other military works, the manufacture or purchase of arms and ammunition, and the administration of the Engineers generally. He might be called the Director-General of Engineers and Ordnance. The votes of the different members of the Board would, of course, all count equally.*

* See Appendix R.

The above scheme would, without any very disturbing internal changes, give a practical division of duties among the military members, so calculated as to give the most important functions of administration their due prominence, and to keep together those functions which are naturally connected with each other. A Board constructed on these lines would provide for the adequate discussion of every important aspect of any military question without being unnecessarily large. But it is essential to remember that if these heads of departments are really to be efficient councillors on the Board they must not be overworked with the routine of their own departments. Hand in hand with the reconstruction of the War Office must go the most vigorous measures for the decentralization of the work at present done within it to the administrative districts. At the same time, the division of the work under the proposed scheme would be such as to enable each head of a department to act with freedom and responsibility without fear of interfering with matters within the province of other departments, and therefore make decentralization more feasible.

The chief duties of the Commander-in-Chief would, as has already been said, be absorbed by the Board. One important function, however—that of inspection—would be vested in the proposed Inspector-General of the Forces, and could with advantage be largely developed. Independent inspection is undoubtedly a most important adjunct to efficiency, and the considered report of an eminent soldier on the general condition of the Army, supplemented, if need be, by technical reports on the different arms from members of his staff, might be of the greatest service in keeping the condition of our

forces before the Cabinet and—as far as publication may be advisable—before Parliament and the country. And if a thorough-going decentralization of the army corps commands is carried out, as it ought to be, the Inspector-General can also fulfil an important function in supervising the training of the different army corps, so as to insure a general uniformity, without the paralyzing effect of the present system of War Office control.

The actual command of the whole of the forces in Great Britain might also in case of invasion be entrusted to this officer. His exact position relative to the Board is a matter that requires careful definition. It is desirable that the inspection should be independent. At the same time, it would never do to set up the Inspector-General as an independent authority with a policy of his own, which, through his reports, he might attempt to force on the country. The best solution, perhaps, is the one indicated by Lord Esher in his memorandum when he compares the position of the proposed Inspector-General with that of the Auditor-General in the domain of finance. That officer, though he reports directly to Parliament, independently of the executive departments whose accounts he inspects, is yet appointed by the Executive Government. Just so the Inspector-General would be appointed by the Board, his staff would be sanctioned by the Board, and his inspection would be confined within the limits of the policy of the Board. But his report would go directly to the Cabinet through the Secretary of State.

How far the suggestions outlined above will correspond in any way with the reforms which will actually

be undertaken by the new Secretary of State I cannot say. But no reorganization of the War Office will be satisfactory which fails to give adequate status and authority to the 'Brain of the Army,' which fails to divide the work on scientific lines, and which fails to provide for a proper system of inspection. And without a satisfactory reorganization of the War Office there can be no real Army Reform.

CHAPTER X

THE SELECTION AND TRAINING OF THE SOLDIER

So far the discussion of the military problem in these chapters has dealt mainly with questions of organization. But no less important than the design upon which the framework of an army is built up is the fighting stuff of which it is composed. The best organization will come to hopeless grief if it is based upon rotten material. On the other hand, the most defective organizations have done great things by virtue of the quality of the men that composed them—witness both the Boers and ourselves in the late war. No lesson of the South African War is, in fact, more important than the lesson of quality. In every aspect, physical, moral, and intellectual, the quality of the individual soldier or officer has become a larger factor under modern conditions of warfare.*

The modern rifle is a weapon of precision, and the effective use of it is a fine art. It requires a rare skill of eye and hand, but that skill is well worth attaining, for the difference between good and indifferent shooting has been enormously accentuated. Under the old conditions

* 'The main lesson of the war is that modern conditions of warfare entail higher training of the individual.'—19,299; COLONEL D. HAIG. See Appendix B.

of short ranges and close order, the target presented was easy, and, whether the bullet was accurately aimed or not, it helped to create what military writers called a fire-swept zone, a region full of stray bullets, which could only be crossed at great peril. The long ranges at which firing now begins, combined with the looseness of formation adopted on both sides, preclude that 'hail of bullets' from ever being concentrated enough to be really serious, in spite of the additional effect given to it by magazine fire and flat trajectories. On the other hand, aimed fire is far more deadly. The skilled rifleman has ample time for any number of carefully aimed shots, even against charging cavalry. Against infantry working up to a position he may spend a whole morning quietly picking off his men, whether directly in front of him or half a mile away to either flank. At close quarters he takes advantage of every momentary bobbing up of an enemy's head to put in a quick, deadly shot. He is worth any number of men whose fire is inaccurate at long ranges and flurried at short. If, furthermore, he is skilled in taking cover, while his adversary exposes himself unnecessarily, the advantage with him is still greater.*

* 'The intelligent use of ground, combined with accurate shooting, is the secret of tactical success, whether for the individual scout, the officer who directs, the skirmishers in action, or the General who frames the plan of battle.'—10,446: Lord Roberts.

'Good shooting, accurate judging of distance, and intelligent use of ground, are the very essence of success in modern warfare, and well worth the purchase at a heavy price.' — 14,191: Lord Methuen.

'And you would insist on good shooting?'—'I think that a man should be turned out of the Army if he is not a first-class shot; I think that should be absolutely requisite, and everything else is subordinate to that.'—20,608: Sir A. Conan Doyle.

Physical stamina and endurance, again, are qualities which are of more importance than ever in the composition of a good soldier.* A battle will frequently begin with a long march before daylight on an empty stomach. Once in the firing line, the soldier may have to remain there all day, or even several days, with no more food and drink than he has taken with him in his pockets and in his water-bottle. In the frequent deadlocks that will occur in modern battles, the advantage will be all on the side of those who can hold out longest without physical exhaustion.

Still greater has become the importance of mental quality, even for the ordinary soldier. He must understand clearly what his officer wants him to do, for once the fight has begun he may be separated from him for hours. In the absence of any visible signs, he must make his own deductions as to the enemy's whereabouts from the shape of the ground for a thousand yards or more about him, and from the direction in which the bullets strike the ground in his proximity. When he has discovered that, and estimated his range, he must

* '. . . It must be remembered that fighting is not the only demand made upon our soldiers: it is, of course, the main object to be kept in view in any system of training; but all, especially British soldiers, must possess great powers of endurance. Without them they are really worth nothing. What is it which causes a long casualty roll during a campaign? Not the losses in battle, but the steady, never-ceasing disease brought about by insufficient and badly-cooked food, hard work, night duties, and by exposure to extremes of heat and cold. Against such trials only the strongest can bear up; and unless our regiments are composed of men full-grown and of prime stamina our armies, in point of numbers weak enough for the work they have to do, must dwindle away very rapidly when they take the field.'—Lord Roberts: Speech at the Mansion House, 1881.

calculate his own best route across the intervening space towards a more effective fire-position. He must be intensely observant and up to every ruse that may induce the enemy to betray their movements or help to conceal his own.*

Lastly, modern conditions have enormously increased the value of moral quality. The main moral quality required of the soldier under older conditions was discipline—an unquestioning readiness to go anywhere at the word of command. By continuous practice the soldier learnt to carry out automatically, and without a thought of consequences, the orders which were shouted at him. The complete hypnotization of the soldiers by their officers was looked on as the ideal of training. Discipline supplied the place of courage, and intentionally superseded both reason and will. With men scattered at wide intervals and separated for hours from their officers, that form of discipline is no longer possible. Discipline, indeed, in its widest sense, has become more important than ever, but it must be discipline on a higher plane.† The passive, automatic discipline of the

* 'If we have intelligent, well-educated men we can deal with them very much quicker than we can with the ordinary recruit.

'Education and intelligence make all the difference in the world, to my mind.'—13,288, 13,290: LORD ROBERTS.

† 'The war has brought prominently to notice the necessity in our training of cultivating and improving the individual intelligence of the private soldier without impairing the discipline, which is as essential now as ever it was.'—16,635: COLONEL SIR F. W. STOPFORD.

'The idea of obtaining an Army full of intelligence alone does not commend itself to me. It must be an Army which has discipline and intelligence.'—19,757: COLONEL E. M. CRABBE.

'Throughout the war I noticed that the higher the discipline of the regiment, the greater strain it would bear. The unfortunate incident at Magersfontein, by touching the Highlanders' pride,

ear must give place to the active, conscious discipline of the mind and of the will. The soldier must have a clear idea of what his superiors want of him, and through a long day's fighting must be imbued with, and sustained by, an unwavering, conscientious resolve to carry out their instructions. The higher discipline of the future must have as its groundwork the careful training of the intelligence and will-power of the individual.* Stupid, listless, weak-willed, self-indulgent men have ceased to be useful as soldiers.

Individual courage, too, is far more essential than ever before, now that its place can no longer be supplied by automatic obedience or by the momentum of serried ranks. The danger to be faced is in itself far more trying to the nerves. To rush into and through a hail of bullets, however deadly, was a comparatively short and sharp affair. To spend a whole day under fire, almost alone; to have to get up of your own accord from

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made them, in my opinion, the finest body of men in the Army.'—16,974: GENERAL COLVILE.

* 'Our aim must be to encourage individuality amongst the men, and to make the company and section commanders understand that they must depend more upon themselves than has hitherto been necessary, because the moment a battalion now gets into action the companies are greatly spread out, and the commander loses all control over them.'—13,247: LORD ROBERTS.

'I think it is of great importance to begin at the beginning of his military service to make the individual man independent and self-reliant, capable of finding his way about and of looking after himself in every way, such as cooking in the field (it is most important to be able to make the best value of what little food he has and make the most of it), sufficiently expert as a shot to be able to hold his own, man for man, with any opponent, and sufficiently intelligent to be able, when left to himself, to carry out the orders of his superiors.'—18,012: MAJOR-GENERAL H. C. O. PLUMER.

cover and advance, when you know that the slightest movement so far has brought a dozen bullets whistling round your ears, and when you have seen everyone else who attempted to advance shot the moment they rose: to do this, not once in a day, but over and over again—these things require a far greater nerve and courage. It is the strain on the nerves, and not the actual casualties, that is the real test of courage. And in the future, as in the past, given otherwise equal conditions, those who can face the strain best will be the victors in every conflict. The soldiers we require must be real 'Ironsides'—men of iron nerve and resolution.

Yet another factor whose importance has been increased by modern conditions is that of mutual confidence or *esprit de corps*. It was an easy thing for the soldier to do his duty when he saw his comrades and his officers doing theirs by his side. In the future he will have to rely mainly on his faith in their doing it, and unless that faith is intensely strong he will be tempted to shirk, and to excuse himself on the pretext that he believes that he has done as much as anyone else. The training of mutual confidence and affection in a regiment is more essential than ever.*

To sum up, then, quality in modern war is everything. Given quality—given an army, however small, of highly-trained, intelligent, courageous, and resolute officers and men, working in perfect co-operation, and no inferior army, whatever its numbers, will be able to stand up against it. Its very smallness will be an enormous advantage, for it means added mobility, and mobility is half the art of war. Especially is that so in uncivilized, undeveloped countries, such as those in

* See Appendix A.

which our Imperial Army is most likely to fight. For that Army, above all other armies in the world, quality ought to be the one thing to be striven after. It must be attained, whatever the cost, and till it is attained the numbers of our existing force must be steadily reduced. To see our rulers steadily adding on battalion after battalion to the Army, while acquiescing in a constant deterioration in the quality of the recruits enlisted, is a spectacle that may well make one despair of the possibility of Army reform.

How does it actually stand at present with the quality of our Army?* How are the men selected and how are they trained? To take the men first: the bulk of them come from the very lowest section of our population. A comparison of recruiting returns at any regimental depot with the temperature statistics is sufficient to convince anyone that it is mainly the hand-to-mouth class from which our Army is drawn. Frosty nights are the recruiting sergeant's best allies. Physically, mentally, and morally, the ordinary Army recruit is a long way below the average standard of his countrymen. In most cases a townsman, he possesses no natural fighting aptitudes whatsoever. Initiative he lacks, for the sufficient reason that, if he had not lacked it, he would probably have sought, and found, some more profitable employment than soldiering. Self-restraint, foresight, frugality, are equally not to be expected of him. He has probably been through the Board school, but in the absence of a national system of secondary education has forgotten most of the little he knew; and though he can usually write his name, he is to all intents and purposes illiterate.

Once in the Army a good deal is done to improve him.

* See Appendix C.

Healthy food and an excellent system of gymnastic training develop his body out of all recognition; he learns to march moderately well, and becomes a middling indifferent shot with a rifle.* Regimental discipline and the exertions of his officers make a wonderful difference to his moral character. The courage, self-sacrifice, and uncomplaining fortitude our soldiers showed on the battlefields of South Africa are the highest testimony to the inherent soundness of much of our present regimental training. But he is still very far from being even a moderately effective soldier for present-day requirements. Much as his body is developed in the Army, he is still, in too many cases, constitutionally weak. Though war is pre-eminently the open-air profession, very little is done to change the soldier from a townsman to a countryman. The keenness of vision necessary in modern war, the ability to find his way about by night and day, the prudence with regard to food and drink which are acquired in regions where shops and public-houses are scarce—all these are qualities which the soldier learns little of in the course of his service, especially at home. If anything, the tendency of regimental life, in all these respects, is to make him even more helpless than he was to begin with.

* 'My opinion, gained from my experience during the Tirah and the South African campaigns, is that the shooting of our infantry is not worthy of the accuracy and the long-range powers possessed by the present rifle.'—14,188 : Lord Methuen.

'I think the shooting was very disappointing.'—17,990: General Plumer.

'Directly anything exciting or unexpected happens, the soldier's aim becomes very undependable. It is to remedy this that snap-shooting has been encouraged recently, and it can scarcely be overdone.'—15,972: Major-General Sir H. J. T. Hildyard.

War training takes up far too small a portion of the soldier's time, and most of it, owing to lack of ground available, is utterly unreal and therefore valueless. The ordinary recruit is not characterized by initiative or force of character, both qualities so essential for the soldier of the future. Nothing is done in the training of the soldier to develop those qualities. On the contrary, he is treated throughout as a child, incapable of doing anything except under constant supervision. Still more serious is the fact that practically nothing is done for his general education. There is no point that needs being insisted upon more strongly than the importance of general intelligence for the soldier. Every war is so much of a new experiment that no amount of practice of methods found good previously and elsewhere will make a soldier really useful when the occasion arises, unless he has also got the general alertness of mind to observe the peculiar new features introduced by the particular conditions and to adapt himself readily to them. And the longer the interval since an army has been engaged in a serious war, and the more out of date and the less realistic its training, the more important does this factor of intelligence become.

The splendid performances of the Imperial Light Horse, of the City Imperial Volunteers, and of many of the Yeomanry and Volunteer corps, do not prove that the art of war is a thing which requires no training, but they do prove that general intelligence is so useful an element in the composition of a soldier that even a very short training will enable intelligent men to equal inferior men who have been trained on unintelligent and routine lines. Where the class of men composing the untrained irregular corps was much the same as that of the ordi-

nary Army recruit, as in the case of many units raised during the last year of the war, the normal inferiority of the untrained, undisciplined man was often only too appallingly displayed.

The first essential, then, is to get a better class of men to begin with. As has been said in previous articles, this is an end to which there is no one royal road. An increase in the rate of pay is the simplest and most obvious remedy; but as an increase once given is extremely difficult to withdraw, it may be as well to wait and let other remedies take effect before proposing a still further rise beyond the one that is shortly to come into force. But we must not, after a reasonable interval, shrink even from that further rise if it is necessary to secure the right stamp of men. An improvement in the conditions of service, so that the soldier can either leave the colours young enough to start fair in other walks of life, or find a life's career in or connected with the Army, will do a great deal, especially if accompanied by a considerable reduction in the number of recruits annually raised. Lastly, an improvement and extension in our national education must be relied upon to foster the military spirit of the nation, and, at the same time, to turn out a mentally and physically better class of recruit. With all these forces working together, it ought to be possible to arrive at a healthy condition of recruiting. When this is attained, the recruiting officer's chief task will be, not to induce recruits to come forward, but to examine and select among a crowd of candidates those who present the best evidence of their physical, mental, and moral fitness to serve as soldiers of the King.*

* 'When to be put out of the Army is a punishment, then you will find that we shall save a lot of money.'—4,212 : Sir E. Wood. See also Appendix D.

Once in the Army, the process of education ought to continue uninterruptedly. It should keep two main ends in view: first, to make the soldier a better fighter; and, secondly, to give him a better chance in life when he leaves the Army. There is no reason why every soldier should not be taught at least the elements of geography, military history, and map reading. There are not a few trades, too, which might be taught in the Army which would have a military value as well as be useful to the individual. It may be argued that the soldier will have no time for all this education besides his more purely military training. The answer to that objection is, first, that at present very little of the soldier's training is military, and, secondly, that the present distribution of the soldier's time is badly arranged. An entirely disproportionate part of his time is spent on fatigues and other unmilitary tasks, which would be far more effectively done by contractors or clerks engaged for the purpose, or by Reservists whose training was over.

One of the radical faults, in fact, of the whole Army system is the failure to realize that time has any value whatsoever. To understand what that means one has only to watch a whole company of soldiers spending a morning in carrying coals round a cantonment in coal-scuttles, or a hapless subaltern perspiringly struggling with his complicated pay-sheets, or filling up endless forms about things of absolutely no consequence. One may, perhaps, hope that a really large increase in the soldier's pay, coupled with a reduction in the size of the Army, will lead the authorities to recognise the soldier as a skilled workman, and to value his time more than they have done hitherto. In the business world the increasing cost of labour has led to many of the most

far-reaching improvements. Could not we English turn the necessary expense of a voluntary Army to some similar good result in the development of the science of war?

Not only must the soldier's time be set free for military training, but he must have the necessary natural facilities for training. The increase in range of modern rifle-fire has resulted in a still greater increase of the area required for modern operations—an increase whose ratio may, perhaps, be summed up in the formula that the area required varies as the square of the range of the weapons employed. But our training-grounds are still determined by 'Brown Bess' standards. If, then, the modern rifle shoots ten times as far as 'Brown Bess,' our training-grounds ought to be a hundred times as large as they are. This question of the training-grounds is one that cannot be got round. It is no use spending time teaching soldiers and officers to make-believe at skirmishing across a cricket-field; it would be far better for them to listen to a lecture on Shakespeare, or play hide-and-seek in a country lane.

The present state of affairs is, in this respect, hopeless, and the concentration of masses of troops at the half-dozen centres which have training-ground sufficient for a single battalion makes it very much worse.* The

* 'It is a mistake to think that the actual troops get the most useful lessons when assembled in large forces, for on those occasions one always sees many of the most impossible situations. The men are really best taught in smaller operations.'—20,215: Major-General J. Talbot Coke.

'The most valuable part of the training is the company training under the supervision of the commanding officer of the regiment, when two or three companies are employed on the one side against two or three on the other.'—16,855: General Gatacre.

scattering of troops in small units, even in separate companies, over the countryside for ordinary training, and the enforcement of a thorough-going Manœuvres Act, or the selection and purchase of a few really large manœuvre areas in the less cultivated parts of the United Kingdom, could be made to do a good deal for such portions of the Regular Army as have to be kept in England. But the real remedy, and the cheapest remedy, is to keep the Regular Army mainly in those parts of the world where training-ground is cheap and unlimited. It is no use saying that South Africa is more expensive for keeping troops in than England, if you exclude the consideration of what it would cost to buy or hire adequate training-grounds in this country.

The discussion has so far been concerned mainly with the Regular soldier, but the general principles apply equally to the members of the national Home Defence Forces. It is only necessary that, in view of the different conditions affecting the two forces, the ways and means by which the essential soldierly qualities are produced in them should differ. The great difference really is that the Volunteer or national Militiaman can afford much less consecutive time for his training than the professional soldier, and cannot acquire that sense of discipline and *esprit de corps* which is fostered by the regimental life. The way to supply those deficiencies does not lie in trying to turn the Volunteer into a Regular by long periods of training, but in directing the agencies which already influence his life into channels which will insure his military efficiency. If his period of training is short and interrupted, his intelligence must be increased to make better use of it. That is a question of the general educational level of the nation. If he is too much of a

townsman or defective in physique, that, again, is a matter that only general social and economic reform can deal with. Patriotism, local sentiment, a healthy and friendly relationship between the different classes of society, must supply the *moral* that in professional soldiers is created by the common life and by regimental tradition. In other words, given a sound general organization and reasonable facilities for training — *i.e.*, abundant rifle-ranges and a thorough-going Manœuvres Act — the well-being and efficiency of our national Defence Force must in the main depend directly upon our physical, intellectual, and social well-being as a nation.

CHAPTER XI

THE SELECTION AND TRAINING OF OFFICERS

ALL that was said in the preceding chapter on the importance of the quality of our soldiers applies no less to their superiors. The real lesson for us of our late experiences of modern warfare is, in fact, that our Army wants raising a step in the scale right through. The qualities laid down as essential in our soldiers in the last chapter are practically those that older theory postulated for non-commissioned officers. Our non-commissioned officers will in future have to perform many of the duties hitherto assigned to the company leaders. They will, therefore, have to possess those intellectual and moral qualities that we have hitherto connected with the junior regimental officers. Every sergeant will have to be not only a leader of men, but also a tactician; and similarly every captain will have to be something of a general. As for our generals and staff officers, we shall require of them qualities, especially of the intellect, which hitherto have only been very exceptional in their ranks.

To take the non-commissioned officer first. He has been described as the 'backbone of the Army.' If that was true of him before the war, it will be truer still in the future.* Through all the heat and crisis of the

* 'With the enormously increased area of a modern battle-field

battle the conduct of the fighting-line will be almost entirely in his hands. Of the dozen or more scattered groups into which a company will break up in action, he will of necessity command all but three or four. For these he will have to select positions, indicate and direct lines of advance, supervise the erection of cover, control the expenditure of ammunition, and give a variety of orders on urgent questions which cannot be deferred till the possible visit of an officer. He will have to be a man of great practical resource, keen intelligence, and a power of enforcing obedience and respect.

The experience of the war showed that some possessed all these qualities in the highest degree. But the general verdict of experienced regimental officers undoubtedly is that a better class of non-commissioned officers is urgently needed. A considerable increase of pay and improvement in accommodation and privileges would do a great deal to attract a better stamp of men. But it is no less essential to train the non-commissioned officer when he has been selected. Special training-classes for non-commissioned officers are very useful. But still more important an improvement would be to give a distinctive intellectual and social stamp to the whole body of non-commissioned officers by the establishment of non-commissioned officers' training-colleges, both in England and at the other great military centres.*

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the section commander has grown from a nonentity to a person of great importance.'—16,974 : GENERAL COLVILE.

* 'And you want to train non-commissioned officers?'—'Yes; I have seen a battalion in the German Army of non-commissioned officers specially being trained for their duties, and it struck me what a very fine lot of men they were. I think every battalion in the army sends up eight men per annum to it, and they go through

Even if the course were only six months, or taken in separate terms of three months each, the difference upon the mind and character of the men who went through it would be very great indeed. This step would help greatly to solve what is often a serious difficulty in the internal administration of a battalion — namely, the difficulty non-commissioned officers find in asserting their authority, and the reluctance of many of the best soldiers to accept the responsibilities of the position. It would also make it far easier to grant more commissions from the ranks, for it would insure a certain level, both of intellectual ability and of social polish, in the candidates for such commissions. However serious may be the practical difficulties attending promotion from the ranks, no one can doubt that anything which tends to diminish them and to open out, at any rate, a prospect of the highest career to every man who joins the Army will enormously improve the average quality of the men who enlist. For it should never be forgotten that it is the

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a course of two years' training. They are taught really, and when they leave that school I should say they are as efficient as the average British subaltern of, say, five years' service.'—14,616: SIR A. HUNTER.

'The difficulties in the way of having a thoroughly efficient and well-trained body of non-commissioned officers are enormous. There are no training-schools for them, as there are in continental armies, and except during the period of annual training, and by no means always then, they have no facilities for practising on ground with men the subordinate commands they have to exercise in war.' —15,972: GENERAL HILDYARD.

'I believe that good schools of instruction are very useful for the education of non-commissioned officers, but they should be very carefully organized and managed by specially selected officers. The Swiss schools are excellent, and their course of instruction well thought out.'—17,484: MAJOR-GENERAL SIR BRUCE HAMILTON.

prizes rather than the ordinary prospects of a profession that determine its popularity.

The selection, education, and general training of our officers have only recently been the subject of an exhaustive inquiry by a committee. The report of that committee is a document of the greatest importance and deserving of the most careful study. It brings out the defective character of our present methods of selection, the inferior quality of the education hitherto given at the educational establishments, the lack of any inducement for an officer to continue studying after he has scraped through his promotion examinations, the general contempt for education shown in the small fraction of the Army vote assigned to it and in the inferior status of instructors, the paralyzing influence of the lack of responsibility, and the deterrent influence upon boys of ability of the expense of Army life and of the absence of any reasonable system of promotion for efficiency.

The recommendations of that committee included alterations in the present entrance examinations, a reorganization of the Sandhurst course, and the admission of larger numbers of University and colonial candidates. They might well have been a little bolder. To put the original education of our officers on a better basis, the right step would be to create a real military University, giving the very best historical, scientific, and military education. By the very best I mean an education so good that people will send their sons to this University for the sake of the education alone, even when they have no intention of entering them for the Army. That, indeed, is already the case with Kingston Military College in Canada. Commissions would be given by nomination to the pick of these students, and they would

supply the bulk of the officers of the Regular Army, though, of course, a considerable number of nominations would still go to other Universities. The commissions given to students from Kingston might well be increased, and similar military colleges ought, if possible, to be created in South Africa, in Australia, and New Zealand, to supply officers for a truly Imperial Army.

The present system, by which men who have failed to pass into Sandhurst join the Militia in order to get into the Regular Army afterwards, is thoroughly unsound. When a real Home Army on sound lines is established, its officers might well be appointed by qualifying examination, preference being given to those who had a University training. In the junior ranks they would be non-professional—that is to say, they would follow some ordinary civilian career in addition to holding their Militia commissions. In the higher ranks the amount of work involved would require professional officers. That, as I have pointed out before, does not imply that there should be an absolute bar to the promotion of the unprofessional officer above a certain grade, but only this, that if he wishes to take his promotion above a certain rank he will be obliged to give all his time to his work. In any case, exchanges between the Imperial Army and the local defence forces, whether of the United Kingdom or of the Colonies, should be freely encouraged. And it is to those forces, as well as to the *cadre* formations referred to in a previous chapter, that we must look for that reserve of officers which, as the experience of the South African War has shown us, is so vital a necessity to any army which, like ours, has to contemplate the possibility of a sudden expansion in

times of great emergency to two or three times its ordinary mobilization strength.

One of the most serious deterrents to getting a good class of candidates for commissions is the expense of living in the Army.* There is a good deal to be said from the purely military point of view for an aristocratic class of officers; there is absolutely nothing to be said for a military plutocracy. Good breeding and good brains will both tell on the battlefield. Money will not. In no branch of our service are brains more essential than in the cavalry. Yet such is the deadly effect of the heavy financial demand made on the cavalry officer that the standard of marks which enables a man to get into the cavalry is many thousands below that of the infantry. How many brainless sons of wealthy *parvenus* enter the cavalry simply and solely for the sake of the social connections they hope to acquire! Letters of general admonition to cavalry colonels will do little. Something can be done by holding them personally responsible for the expenditure in their regiment. Much more effective, if only it is carried out with any thoroughness, is the innovation recently introduced by Mr. Brodrick, by which the former distinction between cavalry and infantry candidates for Sandhurst has been done away with, and the commissions are in future to be assigned at the discretion of the authorities. When once the cavalry regiments get nothing but poor subalterns sent them, and learn that neither by

* 'The necessity of ample means bars efficiency. A rich man seldom remains long enough in the service, nor can he be said to make it his profession; he consequently lacks the necessary incentive to advance himself.'—War Commission, Appendix XXIII., p. 170: Lord Scarbrough.

'ragging' nor by any other means are they likely to get any richer ones, then the extravagance in the cavalry will soon be a thing of the past.

But it is not only in cavalry regiments that the expenses of living are too high. When a profession, instead of supporting a man, requires him to possess an additional £100 to £250 a year, it must inevitably lose the best men as compared with other professions. There can be no better material for officers than many of our young colonials. But how many of those who were offered commissions during the war as a reward for distinguished service accepted them when they discovered the financial prospect before them? An extravagant standard of living is no doubt largely at fault; but the authorities are responsible for much by their utter disregard of the officer's purse, whether they order a move or design a new and soul-stirring uniform. There are, indeed, certain signs of improvement. The adoption of the recommendations of the last committee on cavalry officers' expenses will do a great deal to keep within limits the obligatory expenses of the cavalry officer. But until the authorities really show that they consider the interests of officers and are anxious to treat them fairly, it will be almost impossible for them to secure any permanent reform in the standard of living.

Last, but not least, in this consideration of expense is the fact that the officer's pay is inadequate.* In the

* 'The worst-paid man in England is the young officer. He gets the work, but he has not got the same pay that my butler has, when you take into account what the butler gets in the way of feeding, housing, and clothing.

'The great bulk of the young men of ability in England do not come into our badly-paid profession.'—9,180-9,181: Lord Wolseley.

junior ranks this is not so important. Many a man can get a small allowance from his family and live poorly for a few years. And, after all, there are few of the liberal professions in which it is easy to earn more than the merest pittance to begin with. But a service in which it is practically impossible for anyone but a general to marry and live conformably to his station in life without considerable private means cannot be said to hold out a reasonable prospect of a career. Any increase would, no doubt, mean a good deal of money. But it is no good evading the issue by shutting our eyes. It is the same as in the case of the soldier—a really efficient class of men can only be attracted by reasonable conditions. If that means extra expense, the numbers must be curtailed, and one may perhaps hope that a realization of the cost of the officer to the nation will lead to greater attention being paid to his training and less indifference shown towards any waste of his time either by himself or by his superiors.

Once in the Army, the officer must be given reasonable opportunities for improving himself. At present there can be little doubt that the ordinary officer loses rather than gains in intelligence and initiative with every year in the service. In the South African War it was not, as a rule, the juniors, but the seniors, who failed.* In the

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'I do not believe that the Army will ever become a working profession until inducements are offered which will enable it to compete financially with the many trades open in civil life. Whether such financial encouragement would lower the tone of the Army is an open question. Personally, I do not think it would.'—16,974: General Colvile.

* 'The junior officers were, in my opinion, better than the senior officers.'—173: General Lord Kitchener.

former, the natural qualities of the mind and will had not yet been wholly petrified by routine, and developed with wonderful rapidity under the stress of great events. In the latter, there was too often nothing left to develop. Great personal gallantry, intense dread of responsibility,* agonizing irresolution, utter lack of resource — this list of characteristics would serve as a brief personal sketch of more than one senior officer who, as chance would have it, was 'Stellenbosched' or honourably mentioned in despatches.

A thorough-going system of personal responsibility is an absolutely essential reform for our Army. Decentralization at the top is no use without decentralization below. Men who have been brought up to do nothing without permission from some official superior,† and, on the other hand, to allow no subordinate to do anything without interfering in it, can hardly be expected to act with initiative and resolution in the great crisis of war. The chain of responsibility must begin at the very bottom. The company officer must be given a free hand in the administration and training of his company. As long as he produces the required result

'The proportion of failures among commanding officers and brigadiers was considerably larger than that in the junior ranks.'—10,446: LORD ROBERTS.

* 'That dread of responsibility, which is what we all suffer from most, I think, should be done away with.'—16,479: MAJOR-GENERAL A. H. PAGET.

'There is a general shirking of taking any responsibility of that kind, taking any initiative, and daring to do anything that is not already laid down in the regulations.'—11,822: MR. A. D. FRIPP.

† 'The greatest fault of our officers, as far as my experience goes, lies in their want of initiative, and I believe this to be entirely the fault of their superiors.'—16,974: GENERAL COLVILE.

in well-trained men, he should be allowed to use whatever methods he pleases. If he does not produce that result, he must feel the consequences personally in loss of promotion or even dismissal.* The same must apply to officers commanding regiments, divisions, or commands.† Their tenure of their appointment and their prospects of promotion must depend directly upon the state of efficiency and discipline of their commands, as tested by the frequent and careful inspection of their superiors.‡ In the Navy, and to some extent in the

* 'Captains and subalterns should be *real* commanders, and battalion and brigade commanders should confine themselves to supervision, while they refrain from meddling with details. Officers who show marked professional zeal and ability should be considered for special substantive promotion.'—173: LORD KITCHENER.

'Junior officers should be given responsibility from their first entry into the service. They should be made to really command their unit, however small, and be answerable for its efficiency and success. . . . The so-called chain of responsibility is too often one of irresponsibility.'—19,820: MAJOR-GENERAL R. S. BADEN-POWELL.

'If we can ingrain initiative and responsibility into our younger officers, they will carry it on with them into the higher ranks, and thus a general improvement in the regimental officer will be attained.'—19,737: COLONEL CRABBE.

'The only way to deal with that (interference with junior officers) is to remove the commanding officer who shows that sort of spirit (interference); that is the proper way, and to remove him without any hesitation.'—17,300: LIEUTENANT-GENERAL SIR J. FRENCH.

† 'Officers commanding regiments and squadrons must be held really responsible for the training of their commands.'—19,299: COLONEL HAIG.

‡ 'It is very important that the system of inspection as carried on in Germany should be more in vogue with us. I mean that the rules should not be so rigid and hard and fast, and that commanding officers should be given more power as to the way in which they carry out their measures to secure the efficiency of their corps, and everything should be judged by inspections, as it is in Germany,

artillery, officers are entrusted with responsibility young, and the difference in zeal and intelligence immediately strikes the outsider's attention.*

Not only does the officer require opportunities for training his sense of responsibility and initiative, but also for perfecting himself in the more technical part of his profession. The lack of time, due to the employment of officers and soldiers on unmilitary duties, and the absence of adequate training-grounds, has an even more deadening effect on officers than on their men.† An officer

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from the smallest units upward. The captain is responsible for his company, and he inspects it; the battalion commander inspects each company, and his battalion is inspected by the brigade commander, who is responsible for his brigade. The divisional commander then inspects the brigade, and is responsible for the division, and the army corps commander inspects the divisions. Everything is carried out in that way, and the officer is allowed to work up to the pitch of efficiency that is required of him in his own way, and is not interfered with; but if he does not work it up to that pitch, he gets what they call in Germany *blauen Brief*, or blue letter, and he has to go promptly. That ladder of inspection is very important. It increases individuality and gives responsibility to everybody, from the subaltern officers upwards. The subaltern officers are responsible for their sections.'—7,671-7,672: MAJOR-GENERAL SIR A. E. TURNER.

* 'From the earliest days they (boys in the Navy) are thrown into responsible and difficult positions, and they are made the straight, clean-minded young fellows that they are by their education. I say in the Army it ought to be the same, and we ought to be taught; every one of us ought to be taught a great deal more than we are by the State to fit us for our positions as officers.'—14,618: SIR A. HUNTER.

† 'Musketry training all the year round, intelligent seeking of cover, a sufficiently large unit to give an officer interest in his command, and ample space on which to work. Given these conditions, let every opportunity be offered to the best officer to see his

cannot take a keen interest in the training of his company if he can never get more than half of them together, and never the same half on two consecutive occasions. Confined to a small patch of ground, of which he and they know every inch by heart, he has no means of telling if they are really progressing in their ideas of skirmishing. More probably he feels a conviction at heart that the conditions are so cramped and unreal that the men are only acquiring false notions that will cost them dear in the day of battle. All this make-believe must be got rid of, whatever the cost, and adequate training-grounds provided. There are plenty of them in the British Empire, though not, perhaps, in the environs of London.

But general intellectual development is no less essential than practice under realistic conditions. It should never be forgotten that every war, as has been said before, is a great novel experiment, which no mere practice can solve without the help of intelligence and scientific training. Every encouragement and every facility should be given to officers to study. The first step is to give the scientific study of war a recognised status in the Army. The need for historical and scientific departments in the General Staff has already been dwelt on. An appointment in these, or, indeed, in any branch of the General Staff, should, both financially and from the point of view of promotion, be reckoned among the prizes of the military profession. The same applies to the educational establishments. At present no ambitious soldier cares to take up a 'professorship' at the Staff College or at Sandhurst. That is utterly wrong. They

way to promotion as a reward for his zeal and ability.'—14,285: LORD METHUEN.

should be the objects of ambition for every keen officer, and recognised stepping-stones to high advancement.* Similarly, to have done the course at the Staff College should directly bring with it acceleration of promotion.† At present there is no reward for the officer who goes through the Staff College or any other special course, or qualifies as an interpreter in the most useful European languages, except the consciousness of his own rectitude, and a vague hope that the initials after his name may possibly some day catch the eye of some exalted personage trying to pick out an officer for some special service out of a list of unknown applicants.

That state of affairs is destructive of all professional keenness. No one can be keener than the young British

* 'The place of Professor at the Staff College should be a stepping-stone to high staff appointments. They should be men admittedly leaders in the field, as well as men of sound theoretical knowledge—men whose value is known throughout the Army.'—14,290: Lord Methuen.

'Until recently we divorced instruction and command. The people who were instructors at Sandhurst and the Staff College were always looked on as people who were no use for fighting, and until we change that we shall never have a satisfactory Army. When I was offered the command of the Staff College in 1877, I wished that Sir George Colley, who was a wonderful instructor, would take it, because he knew so much more than I did. I urged that it should be offered to him, and it was; but he did not take it. And a previous Adjutant-General had said to me, "You want to be commandant? You are much too good." I give you that as an instance of what the feeling was; and, in my opinion, the commandant of the Staff College ought to be one of our most gifted people, because he has the training of forty or fifty of what are presumably the best of the officers.'—4,341: Sir E. Wood.

† 'I think it would be adhered to more closely if an officer who did well on the staff thought he was going to get promotion on returning to his regiment.'—236: Lord Kitchener.

officer if he can see any reasonable prospect of his efforts having a result. But with no men to train, no ground to train them on, no power to do the slightest thing without formal permission, no reward for doing well, or penalty for doing indifferently, it is surprising that he does as well as he does. It is a very common thing to hear naval officers praised to the disparagement of Army officers. But suppose our ships were never allowed to leave harbour or get up more than a quarter of their steam-pressure in order to economize coal; suppose half the crews were always on shore doing odd jobs; suppose no midshipman was ever allowed to take out a boat; suppose the abolition of the existing court-martials for mishaps and of the existing system of promotion for efficiency and special knowledge, and would our naval officers be what they are?

The question of promotion by merit—or, to use a more correct phrase, promotion for competence—is really, as the Education Committee pointed out, the key to the whole question.* Without it, it will never be possible

* 'Young officers should be able to see on entering the service that if they make themselves efficient their prospects will be improved. At present there are few inducements to work, and a young officer, if he fulfils the requirements of his commanding officer, is promoted by seniority, without regard to his efficiency or the reverse.'—17,484: General Bruce Hamilton.

'The idea of promoting a man to be a General simply because he is the senior Colonel, to my mind, is a monstrous process; it is out of date, and certainly is not calculated to give you an efficient Army.'—9,186: Lord Wolseley.

'It is little short of murder to place the lives of 100 men in the hands of any man merely because he happens to be the senior.'—16,974: General Colvile.

See also Appendix S, evidence of Sir E. Wood.

to attract the best brains into the Army, or to create a universal spirit of professional zeal in our officers. Something can be done to stimulate useful accomplishments, such as the knowledge of foreign languages or signalling, by increases of pay; but for general ability and efficiency there is only one form of reward that will produce its effect, and that is rapid promotion.

The difficulties in the way of any system of promotion for fitness are, of course, very great. If they were not, it would be inconceivable that so obviously right a principle should have been consistently ignored. Apart from the theory of vested interests, claims to command a regiment, claims to a War Office appointment after command in the field, and so forth—which, in spite of the abolition of purchase, still pervades our whole Army—the main obstacle lies in our water-tight regimental system. Much may be done by a thorough-going and rigorous enforcement of the right of commanding officers to weed out unsatisfactory junior officers in their first three years of service. Mr. Brodrick's system of classifying officers of the same rank and approximately the same standing into classes A, B, C, and of giving class A preference over class B, and so on, with power to reject any officer who was always in class C, makes a great step in advance, provided always it is really carried into effect. Employment on the staff, too, should count for promotion, and officers returning to their regiments from the Staff College or after a period of staff employment should always return several places higher in their regiment than when they left it.

But the real difficulty is that it becomes intensely awkward in such a close association as a regiment, so completely dominated all through by the sentiment of

rank, suddenly to reverse relative positions, and to put a junior over the head of one who for half his life may have been accustomed to order him about. It is not, however, the difference of age so much as the sudden reversal of existing relationships that would, in such a case, create inevitable resentment and ill-feeling. In other walks of life, men cheerfully acquiesce in their supersession by younger men of ability. The difference is that the younger men come from outside, or from some other department, and are not chosen directly from their own subordinates. To work promotion by fitness in the Army it will be necessary to allow for a certain amount of promotion from one regiment into another. There is no need to go to the length of amalgamating all officers in a single corps of officers, and the transfers of selected officers might even be kept within groups of regiments, such as the Guards, Highlanders, or Rifle Regiments.

Conservative officers will at once raise the cry that to do anything of this sort would be to destroy at one blow the *esprit de corps* of our famous regiments, and remove the one existing stimulus to efficiency. Nothing is more important, or will be more important in the future, than *esprit de corps*. But there is not the slightest reason to fear that such occasional transfers as are required to make possible quick promotion for distinguished ability will ever impair that invaluable quality. There is plenty of *esprit de corps* on a battleship within three months of her commission, and yet hardly any of the officers on her may have served together before. The fact is that nothing is more truly characteristic of the Englishman than the way in which he identifies himself, heart and soul, with any particular organization with which his lot is cast. That is the

secret of his success as commander of troops of alien race and speech. The moment he gets appointed to command Gurkhas, or Sudanese, or National Scouts, he swears that there never were such soldiers or such a corps. Is he less likely to do so if he joins one of the historic regiments of the British Army?

After all, *esprit de corps* must be based on efficiency, and there can be no doubt that a certain moderate amount of transference of officers will do good, not only through the general improvement in the Army consequent on a properly-working system of promotion for efficiency, but also by preventing the internal stagnation and lack of professional interest which only too often come over even the most distinguished regiments. The advantages of cross-fertilization do not apply to gardening and stud-farming alone. They have their counterpart in other organizations, and if we wish to establish and maintain a good type of regiment in the Army we must keep every regiment up to the standard by the occasional introduction of fresh outside blood.

Another indirect advantage of a slight breach in the walls of regimental exclusiveness would be to foster some sense of a larger unity. No one who has followed from within the conduct of the South African War can fail to have been struck by the very serious lack of an *esprit de corps* of the Army over and beyond that of the regimental units and the personal staffs of senior officers. Lord Kitchener alone could say how many times De Wet or some other Boer leader escaped because Colonel A. was unwilling to risk anything in order that Colonel B.'s column should have the 'bag.' The excessive centralization of everything on the regiment, the idea that, while the regiment is sacred, an

officer has no links of sentiment with, or responsibilities towards, the whole body of officers outside it, cannot but be partly responsible for this very serious failing, though the main fault, no doubt, lies in the absence of a general staff with an *esprit de corps* of its own, which should hold the different parts of the Army together in time of war, and strive to suppress all friction and petty jealousy between commanders. Personal staffs only accentuate these, as they throw themselves into every dispute with the one determination of vindicating their general at all costs. There need be no fear that General Staff officers would be disloyal to their generals, but there would be some hope that they would try to smooth over difficulties, and, by always looking at every action from the point of view of the whole Army, rather than from the desire to 'pull off a big thing' for their own particular chief, supply the part of a conscience to generals inclined to play for their own hand.

To return to the subject of promotion for fitness, another serious difficulty is that of insuring a proper selection. Nothing could be more disastrous than a substitution for the present seniority system of a system of promotion based on favouritism, on self-advertisement, or on chance. The first is the more likely when the selection is left to an officer's immediate superior, the last two if it is left to the War Office or any other authority not sufficiently closely in touch with the individual officer. Of these dangers, the last two are the most serious. The first danger, that of favouritism, can be fairly effectually guarded against. The main safeguard is to make commanding officers personally responsible for their selections. If they are already personally responsible for the efficiency of their units they will hesitate before

they promote an unfit subaltern to higher rank within the regiment. If, however, they do so, or recommend an unfit officer for promotion to another regiment or on to the staff, the obvious and simple remedy is to dismiss them. The dismissal of two or three colonels would soon put a stop to favouritism.

In this connection it would be highly desirable to do away with the existing system of confidential reports. A commanding officer's reports should be communicated in identical form to Headquarters, to the officer reported on, and to the officer's seniors. With these restrictions the promotions of subalterns and the appointments to company commands could be safely left to the colonels of battalions, the higher appointments to boards under the direction of the officers commanding the Army Corps or local commands, whether at Aldershot or in South Africa, and only the promotions to the command of brigades and higher units referred to the Army Board, which would then have enough leisure seriously to weigh the merits of different candidates. In this way all the higher places would be filled by men of real capacity, mostly still young enough to adapt themselves quickly to the novel situations of war. However careful the method of selection, the test of war will no doubt prove a certain proportion to be unfit to command in the field, but it will be a very much smaller proportion than that which the test of war discovered on the battlefields of South Africa four years ago.

CHAPTER XII

SUMMARY

In the foregoing chapters I have attempted to define in general terms the objects for which the British Empire requires to keep up its military forces, to point out the inherent defects of our existing Army system, and to suggest the outlines of a system more suited to our immediate political necessities, to our national character, and to our Imperial organization. The discussion of these matters has spread over a good many pages, and has covered a great deal both of detailed criticism of the present and of far-reaching, almost revolutionary, suggestions for the future. It may be as well, therefore, to recapitulate and classify the main conclusions arrived at, and to draw some distinction between those changes in the existing system which are urgently necessary and immediately practicable and those which, however desirable ultimately, can only be introduced after the ground has been cleared for them. Any proposal for Army reform that cannot be carried out by a progressive development of our existing system stands self-condemned. The object of the present work has not been to show that our Army is useless and ought to be abolished in favour of a brand-new one, but to point out in what respects our military system has fallen behind

the political development of our Empire and the progress in the science of war, and to indicate a line of changes by which it may be brought into working harmony with its requirements.

An Imperial Army

One of the first principles laid down has been that our military system must be Imperial—that is to say, it must correspond to those ideas of Imperial unity and Imperial responsibility that have altered the whole character of the British State during the last generation, and are destined to change it still more in the next. A system established by statesmen dominated by the idea that the secession of the self-governing Colonies was not only probable, but desirable, and that even India was a responsibility we retained only because it seemed impossible to extricate ourselves from it, cannot suit a generation which is gradually coming to see that Canada is as real a part and parcel of ourselves as Scotland, and that our Eastern and tropical possessions are not merely troublesome responsibilities, but indispensable conditions of our national commerce and our national energy. In the long-run political ideas control strategy. A generation ago Englishmen thought of themselves as citizens of a European country whose chief interests were in Europe. The existence of British Colonies and dependencies abroad was a source of some pride and satisfaction, as well as trouble, but was, after all, a side issue. It was only natural then to keep the bulk of our Army in and near Europe. To-day we regard ourselves as members of a world State, whose most important unit happens, indeed, to lie off the shores of Europe, but whose chief

and most disputed political interests are in other continents. Obviously, then, our forces should be mainly concentrated near the centre of those interests, especially our land forces, as in those regions we have land frontiers, which our Navy cannot protect. The local defence of these islands and of other sea-girt parts of the Empire must be left to separate local forces, organized in accordance with local requirements and with regard to the protection afforded by the Navy.

Complementary to the Navy

This leads us to the next great principle. Our Empire is an oceanic Empire. Our naval supremacy is its very life's breath, and on it our whole Imperial strategy must be based. The Army must always be secondary to the Navy, not in the sense that it should have to take up the struggle after the Navy has failed—preposterous though that theory is, it seems a very hard one to kill—but because it is only wanted to fulfil certain limited tasks that the Navy cannot fulfil, or cannot fulfil so well. For the Regular Imperial Army these tasks are the defence of certain land frontiers which may be threatened, and the inflicting of some serious offensive blow upon an enemy who cannot be brought to terms by naval defeat alone. The object of the local defence forces should be to give the Navy a free hand to move without being hampered by threats of armed raids, and to supply a latent Reserve in case some great struggle oversea imposed a severer strain upon our Imperial Regular Army than it could cope with unaided.

At a Reasonable Cost

Our naval supremacy is our first need, and the money we can afford to spend on the Army must always be the balance of what we can spare after the paramount needs of the Navy have been satisfied. Our Regular Foreign Service Army, therefore, can never be very large in point of numbers, for that would cost sums of money that even the British Exchequer could not supply. There are certain land wars, consequently, which it is no use attempting to conduct with the Regular Army alone. A war on the Continent of Europe or a war against the United States belongs to this class. We cannot leave their possibility altogether out of sight. As far as information and strategical preparation goes, we should be always ready for them. But for the force to be employed we should have to have recourse to something much larger than our Regular Army alone, and for that we must rely on keeping up the military spirit of the British people throughout the Empire by means of the local defence forces. Our permanent Regular Army must be limited in its cost, and determined in its dispositions mainly by a consideration of the more probable and immediate causes of conflict.

Scientific Preparation

Extravagance is the spending of money to no purpose, and so long as we do not create an adequate organization for the intellectual and scientific preparation for war, so long as we do not know for what purposes we want our Army, so long our Army administration will be extravagant. An adequately equipped Imperial General Staff

is not only the best safeguard for success in war, but the only guarantee for sound economy in peace. The importance of the brain function in organization—whether it be military, naval, diplomatic, or industrial organization—is the one thing that the British nation must be brought to realize, if it wishes to retain its pre-eminent position in the civilized world.

Sound Organization

Closely connected with the need for a General Staff is the need for a sound and businesslike organization of Army Headquarters. That organization must be based on a scientific division of duties, on the definite responsibility of heads of departments, and on close and efficient touch between the professional heads of the Army and the Civil Government. And real efficiency at Headquarters can only be secured by a thorough-going system of decentralization, which, in its turn, is only possible if the administrative units of the Army are so arranged that their internal organization is not continually upset by every minor political or military difficulty that may arise.

Quality versus Quantity

Lastly, such Army as we can afford to keep up must be a real Army and not a sham one. Its organization should look to the field of battle and not to the floor of the House of Commons. It must contain no inefficients, no 'specials,' no men counted twice over. It must see that the soldier's time is given to military training, even if doing so involves paying Reservists or civilians to do the unmilitary tasks that need doing. It must supply

its officers and men with ground to be trained on. These things cost money, but they are essential; and if more money is not forthcoming, then the numbers must be reduced. The all-importance of quality is one of the chief lessons of modern war, and the lesson is one of special application for our Imperial Army, which will mainly have to fight in countries where the natural difficulties are great, and where smallness is a considerable advantage to an army. Providence, in future, will not be with the big battalions, but with the good ones.

The Present System

How does the existing system satisfy the principles here laid down? It is not Imperial; on the contrary, our Regular Army is fettered in its movements, and confused in its strategy and its training, by the idea that one of its chief objects is the passive defence of these islands. To such extent as that passive defence is required at all, its requirements would be more efficiently and economically met by a local army organized solely for home defence. The scale on which it is at present proposed to keep up the Regular Army in England is simply an attempt to duplicate the work of the Navy. If the Navy holds its own, it is unnecessary; if the Navy fails us, our enemies will hardly want to occupy London in order to complete our humiliation. And if that did happen, the chief reason would lie in the diversion of money from the Navy to keep up an overgrown, unnecessary, and horribly expensive Army in England. And, with all its expense, the present system has not provided the comparatively small sums required to insure proper preparation for war. We were unprepared for the South

African War, and we shall be just as unprepared for the next war, for we have no Intelligence Department to speak of, and no General Staff. Nor is our 'brainless' Army sound in its other members. Its organization at Headquarters is apparently in a worse state of chaos than ever before. The Army Corps system introduced by Mr. Brodrick as a step towards decentralization is, apart from all its other defects, incapable of realizing the desired end of decentralization, because it has not been sufficiently adapted to the peculiar conditions of our military system. The fetish of numbers has dominated it so completely as to exclude proper attention being directed to the quality of the men taken into it, or to the training given to them after joining the service. To sum up, our present Army organization is unintelligent, extravagant, and inefficient.

Immediate Remedies

What are the more immediate steps that we can take in order to bring our present defective Army system into harmony with the general principles that should govern our Imperial preparation for war?

A General Staff

First and foremost we must have a General Staff. The functions of a General Staff, at present scattered about among every department of the War Office, or in some cases non-existent, must be united under a single head and given their fullest development. Steps should be taken at once to form an adequate intelligence department both at home and abroad, adequate strategical

and mobilization departments, adequate historical and scientific departments. An immediate increase to the full size of the General Staff which we really require is impossible, for the new men need careful selection and careful training; but the late war has been an excellent test of staff officers, and there are plenty of picked men available to allow of a rapid increase of the existing departments to four or five times their present size. The reorganized Council of Defence will serve to keep the military General Staff in touch with the Navy and with the supreme Government.

An Army Board

The War Office should be reorganized without delay, and in the place of the present chaotic medley between command in the field and office administration should be substituted a real business organization. A board composed of military and civil members, on the lines of the Board of Admiralty, offers in every way the best solution of the problem. The position of Commander-in-Chief should be abolished. The title itself might either lapse or be merged in the Sovereign's headship of the Army. The important and unduly neglected function of inspection, which cannot very well be carried out by a board, should be vested in an Inspector-General of the Forces, subject to the control of the Board, but reporting directly to the Secretary of State.

Administration by Commands and Divisions

The attempt to combine peace administration at home and command in the field abroad in one and the same

unit should be given up as being totally unsuited to our strategical requirements and to the character of our forces. The United Kingdom, and, in fact, the whole Empire, should be divided into thoroughly decentralized administrative commands. These commands should include all the forces, Regular or Auxiliary, in their area, and should be permanent, irrespectively of the number of troops within them at any particular time. The troops within these commands should be organized for campaign purposes into divisions on the Indian model. Each division should be composed of troops of the same kind and under the same terms of service, so that it can always be sent abroad as a complete unit, and so that its despatch need never interfere with the constitution of other divisions in the same command, or disorganize the administration of the command. Certain divisions on the home establishment should be kept on a special footing for immediate embarkation. Others, again, might be reduced to mere skeleton *cadres*. Militia and Yeomanry divisions should be liable for foreign service after all the Regular divisions have gone to the front. In any case, the essential that we must secure is that every unit that goes to the front in war should be an existing unit, and not an improvisation, and that the departure of that unit should in no way impair the efficiency of the administrative unit from which it is taken, either for home defence or for the raising and organization of fresh troops.

South Africa on the Home Establishment

A large field force, at least two full divisions, should be kept permanently in the South African command, for

the sufficient reasons that South Africa is strategically the best-situated portion of our Empire, and that it affords the best and healthiest training-ground for troops in the world. That force should be counted as part of the home establishment — that is to say, recruits will join their battalions in South Africa directly from the depots, and the battalions in South Africa will supply the drafts for their linked battalions in India. This will mean the possibility of a very great reduction of the Regular force kept in the United Kingdom, a reduction which will far more than compensate for the extra cost of keeping troops in South Africa.

Naval Garrisons

A still further reduction could be effected if the various naval garrisons in the Mediterranean and elsewhere were entirely manned by the Royal Garrison Regiment, instead of by linked battalions. They afford no training-ground for soldiers and no scope for strategy, and would altogether be far better under the control of the Navy, for whose benefit they exist.

The Auxiliary Forces

The sole responsibility of the Auxiliary Forces for the defence of the United Kingdom should be clearly recognised. They should have separate and adequately staffed departments in the War Office, and also on the General Staff, where they would take over all the intelligence and mobilization work which is concerned with home defence. Money should be spent freely in providing them with rifle-ranges and other facilities, and an

effective Manœuvres Act should be passed to enable them to receive an adequate training.

A Cadet System

Some system of elementary military training, including the use of the rifle, should be introduced without delay in all schools, in order to lay the foundations of a military spirit in the nation. Without that military spirit, recruiting, whether for the Imperial Army or for the Home Defence Forces, will never be on a healthy basis, and the country will never have the latent reserve necessary for a great crisis.

Selection and Training

To secure the right quality of men the conditions of Army life must be improved. The increase of pay already sanctioned—a further increase in the case of the non-commissioned officers; the alternative of a short three years' service, or of serving on in the Garrison Regiment, or in an Imperial Reserve Regiment, at the end of the period of Colour service (which might very well be increased to nine years); the employment of Reservists as officers' servants and for other non-military, regimental, and garrison duties, ought, combined with the considerable reduction in the number of recruits required, if these suggestions are adopted, to secure a very much better class of men. An increase in the pay of senior officers and a system of promotion for fitness ought to attract a higher average of ability into the commissioned ranks. The educational needs of officers and men have already been dealt with in detail and can

only be met gradually. But the creation of a non-commissioned officers' college is one of the steps that should be taken without delay. As regards training, the essential points to insist on are that officers and soldiers must be given time to be trained in and ground to be trained upon.

Unity of Proposed Changes

The changes here advocated are not separate, disconnected items of improvement, but are part of a connected system. Thus, the keeping of a large force in South Africa on the home establishment is urged, not only for strategical reasons, but also because it provides the training which is so essential and which cannot be got in England, because it allows of a reduction in the total Regular Army, which makes it possible, with due regard to economy, to get a better class of men, and because it helps towards the separation of local and Imperial defence. The substitution of long-service troops at naval garrisons is desirable, not only because these garrisons afford no training-ground for young soldiers, but also because it is likely to improve recruiting, both by offering a prospect of a career to the soldier and by reducing the number of recruits required. The use of Reservists for non-military regimental and garrison work is advisable, equally from the point of view of training, of recruiting, and of mobilization. The separation of home defence from the task of the Regular Army is necessary, alike from the point of view of strategy, from the point of view of training, of economy, and of the possibility of a great development of military power in times of serious crisis.

Future Developments

Further development on the lines thus laid down will be rapid and progressive. A thorough recognition of the fact that a voluntary army must adapt its methods of recruiting and enlistment to the convenience and interest of the class of men whom it hopes to attract ought to lead to the introduction of further modifications in our at present far too rigid system. The experiment ought certainly to be tried of enlisting certain battalions in our big cities on the system which works so well in the crack cavalry regiments in India, and is also, to some extent, in vogue in some Militia battalions at home—namely, of paying a round sum weekly or monthly, and letting the soldier find all his expenses and live at home. The most elementary knowledge of the psychology of the ordinary man will tell us that he prefers a large round sum, even if he has to spend most of it, to being given a small net balance. Many parents of a very good class would gladly let their sons join the Army if they could have them living in their own homes. The saving of expense to the Army in the way of barracks, food, and administration would be very great indeed. A rough calculation has convinced me that we could afford in such a battalion to pay privates from 16s. to 24s. a week according to proficiency, and non-commissioned officers from 24s. to 40s., and yet save considerably on the present cost of upkeep. But the wages I have named would compare very favourably with those attainable by young men in any trade, and ought to secure a far better class than any we tempt at present. In fact, the quality would probably be so good that we could afford to let these men join the Reserve at the end of two years,

or even one year. The majority would do so, but a great many would undoubtedly acquire a taste for the soldier's life, and they would provide an invaluable element in our Foreign Service Army. Such a system, if introduced, ought to be most effective in reducing expenditure, increasing the Reserves, and popularizing the Army.

Again, with the improvement in quality of the recruits enlisted, a still further reduction of the total numbers of the Imperial Army may be possible, especially if the proportion of mounted troops is largely increased. That in its turn may render a further increase of pay more feasible, and at that stage it will become possible to draw upon the magnificent material available in our Colonies. In process of time the home battalions of our Regular Army will be based upon Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, as well as on South Africa; and not only based, but also localized in the sense that a great part of their officers and men will be colonials. The general development of the Colonies will make this process easier, for it will tend to reduce the cost of living, and will provide an increase of those rail and sea transport facilities in which some of them are still so deficient.

There is one particular direction in which the strategical idea of the close co-operation of the Army with the Navy which has underlain these chapters may be still further developed. The suggestion which I wish to recommend to the attention of those who have had the patience to read through the foregoing pages is one that may, at first sight, appear very revolutionary. And yet I am sure that it is one which, at a comparatively small cost, would add enormously to our strategical mobility and to our striking power. I have already dwelt at length

on the strategical advantages of permanently quartering the greater part of our Regular Army in those parts of the British Empire which, both from the point of view of actual distance and of naval strategy, lie much nearer to our 'military front' than the United Kingdom. But there is one part of the British Empire, the greatest part of all, that is far nearer to every region of the world where we may possibly have to fight than any of the Colonies or possessions I have mentioned. I mean the sea. And the suggestion I would make is that, some day, at least one complete division of our Regular Army should be permanently localized at sea. That need not imply that the soldiers would have to spend the greater part of the year on the water. All it implies is that the headquarters and permanent residence of such a division would be a well-fitted and fully-equipped fleet of transports. When on land the division would live under canvas, no great hardship for a force that can always choose its own climate. Thus the division might spend three or four winter months in India. It might, perhaps, stay to join in the Indian manœuvres, and then put to sea for a few weeks before going into camp in Australia or New Zealand. Or, again, the division might land at Cape Town and march through South Africa, engaging in manœuvres with the local forces, and then take ship again at Durban and sail off to practise landings at Vancouver or Wei-hai-Wei. When trouble was brewing the division would at once put to sea and vanish from sight, to reappear suddenly at Port Arthur, or Bandar Abbas, or Diego Suarez.

Such a scheme carried out in practice would indeed be the utilizing to the full of that command of the sea which is already the postulate of our Imperial existence.

The paralyzing effect upon an opponent of an invisible force of even 15,000 men, able to strike with almost equal rapidity every single point of his coasts, is a thing that is almost inconceivable. But those who remember the paralysis that in the early stages of the South African War fell upon British generals in the presence of an invisible and mobile enemy, can form some notion of what the moral effect of such a force would be. It would not be an exaggeration to say that 15,000 men on the high seas at the outbreak of war would be as formidable to an enemy as 100,000 who have first to be mobilized, then provided with transport, and then despatched. And, conversely, from the point of view of Imperial security such a scheme would mean a far more economical use of our material than any ordinary system of localization. A division localized in Eastern waters would be equally available to protect Shanghai against a Boxer outbreak, to suppress a rising in India or South Africa, or to seize the Suez Canal. The likelihood of its being wanted at all four places at once is very small, and, after all, the essence of all sound preparation for war lies not so much in attempting to prepare equally for all conceivable eventualities as in being ready to act really effectively in those eventualities whose probability is indicated by a careful study of the political situation.

The scheme would, of course, be expensive, though, as a matter of fact, not nearly so expensive as might at first be imagined. The cost of constructing and equipping a first-rate transport to hold a battalion of infantry would not be very much more than the cost of the site and the building of good barracks for the same battalion in a large town. There would be a certain expenditure for crew and coaling, but it would probably, on an average,

fall considerably short of the expenditure on the hiring of transports which would otherwise be necessary, whether in war or for drafts and movement of troops in peace. In any case, the extra expenditure would be more than compensated for by extra effectiveness, and by reductions which might consequently be possible. Nor is there any reason to suppose that the scheme would be unpopular with officers or men. They would spend the greater part of the year ashore and in a healthy climate, and they would enjoy all the advantages of frequent change of scenery without the troubles ordinarily attendant upon moving. Officers could have the same cabins and soldiers the same berths and lockers for years, and would get to feel far more at home on their transport than they ever can in barracks.

Such a policy would be only the following out to their logical conclusion of the military principles underlying the whole argument of the present work. It would be not merely the co-ordination of military and naval policy, but their intimate combination into a single whole, the multiplication, as it were, of our small land forces by the whole element of sea power. In a previous chapter I suggested that for our tactical system and for the relative positions of home defence and foreign service we should find our model in the great days when the English archer was supreme in Europe. To that I would add that for the general strategy of our Foreign Service Army we might do well to seek our inspiration in an even remoter period of our history, in the example of the Vikings.

As regards the local defence of this country, the cadet system may develop steadily with the establishment of a national system of secondary education, and the time

may not be so far off when considerations of military economy and efficiency on the one hand, and of national health and morale on the other, will lead to a fairly thorough military training in the schools, followed by short periods of training in the national Militia, being made universal for the whole nation.

The General Staff will still for many years have to go on growing steadily till it can cope with the task of preparing for even the remotest eventualities. At the same time, it should become more and more Imperial. It should enlist colonial officers in its ranks, and attach officers from itself to all the forces of the self-governing Colonies or of the dependencies. Gradually, too, it should become more and more identified with the Imperial Committee of Defence and separated from the existing British War Office. Its functions should be, not to govern and administer, but to supervise distribution, to advise on education, training, and the employment of more scientific implements of warfare, to secure uniformity among the different independent military administrations, to study and prepare for all possible wars, and in the hour of danger to bring together all the forces of the Empire to the task of carrying through the plans it has elaborated in peace. Given steady and continuous development along these lines, we ought in less than ten years from now to succeed in perfecting a military organization which, without imposing any undue strain on our resources, ought to render this Empire reasonably secure against all dangers that it is likely to meet on land.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

SIR IAN HAMILTON ON THE TACTICAL LESSONS OF THE WAR

THE South African War marks a very important epoch in the evolution of military tactics. During the wars of Frederick the Great, the ruling factor was a perfectly trained and disciplined unit; I mean to say that mere numbers were at a discount compared with the cohesion, skill, and experience which characterized the veteran regiment or battalion. Hostilities were then still carried on by the monarch with his mercenary troops, largely consisting of foreigners, which he paid from his own exchequer. Armies were fed from the Royal magazines by elaborate supply trains and communications behind them. They made no attempt to live on the country, and, in fact, were models in the way they behaved towards the ordinary civil population, which, generally, only felt the effects of a war through an increase of taxation.

The French Revolution upset this, together with many other things. It simply put the whole male population of France into the fighting line, and supplied them with an enthusiasm which compensated for mechanical deficiencies. Napoleon, in his turn, taught these masses how to live on the country they were fighting in, and thus gained for his forces advantages of mobility and crushing numerical superiority at any point, which, with the improved use of artillery and small arms, completely broke up and destroyed opponents organized in the older style. The Prussians merely elaborated this general principle by the system of reserves, and by providing their huge armies of partially trained men with a supremely well-trained staff, who saw to it that the most careful prepara-

tions were made beforehand for utilizing for war the whole resources of the State the moment war began.

Thus far the changes of the last century have been economical and political rather than tactical, and the method which the French Revolution initiated, Napoleon improved, and the Prussians perfected, has resulted in Providence siding with the large rather than the highly-trained battalions. Now the moment has arrived when the question will have to be faced as to how far the necessity of a very high standard of individual training in the men, as well as in the officers, is compatible with the maintenance of large armies of short service conscripts.

If the experience of the South African War can be taken as a guide, the big battalion phase is now about to pass away, and we are entering upon a period when the efficiency of an army will depend far more upon the morale and high training of the individuals who compose it than upon the mere numbers of these individuals who may be available. I believe that an army composed of individuals each so highly trained as to be able to take full advantage of the *terrain* and of his wonderful modern weapon, and each animated with a morale and trained to an efficiency which will make him capable of acting in battle on his own initiative, will break through, scatter, and demolish less efficient opposing forces, even if greatly superior in numbers.

No doubt this principle will be more strikingly exemplified in the case of such countries as we are accustomed to wage war in than in the comparatively small enclosed and highly civilized countries of Europe. For where numbers are limited by questions of transport and supply, the folly of despatching anything but superlatively good soldiers is accentuated. In other words, while with our regular army the one important thing is to improve the quality, without troubling too much about mere numbers, numbers may still have a certain advantage for the home defence of England.

It must not be supposed that in insisting upon the necessity for individual initiative and training I wish in any way to ignore or depreciate discipline. Discipline there must be, but it must be discipline on a higher plane. It must be the aim of the

new discipline to make the private soldier capable of keeping steadfastly in mind for the whole of the day, or even for several days, and striving with all his might to carry out, what he has been told by a superior who is no longer present, and who, for all he may know, is dead.

Within a mile of the enemy and in open country it will no longer be possible for the Brigade Major to gallop up to the Colonel with a folded piece of paper prescribing his next movement. Nor can the Colonel send his Adjutant to tell the Captain to change direction or reinforce. Within a thousand yards of a hostile position the Captain can hardly hope any longer to influence the company as a whole by orders, or even by personal example, and the idea of swarms of men surging forward by word of command to the assault of a position is one which we should do our best to encourage among our potential enemies. If a battalion in open country can succeed in getting within 500 yards of the enemy's defensive position, they will have done all that they can do as a collective body.

The men will be lying widely extended and pinned down to some small depression, or bits of cover, by streams of bullets passing just over them. At some part of the line, however, it is almost certain that a brook, or ditch, or imperceptible fold of the ground will give some trifling shelter to a further advance. Half a dozen private soldiers may find themselves at this spot. If they possess sufficient training to recognise the possibilities of their position, together with sufficient new discipline, initiative, and enthusiasm to take advantage of it, they will creep on. They will be followed by others, and if, as a result, the enemy's line is penetrated, even by a few men, the power of their modern armament will make their flanking fire so demoralizing and effective that the position will either be abandoned forthwith, or so much attention will be concentrated on the intruders that an assault may become practicable all along the line.

It will be evident that to do this the mind of each man must be imbued with a firm conviction that the other men of his own rank, whom he does not see, and who may be anywhere within the next few miles, are also doing the same and trying to seize hold of every opportunity; in other words, active

discipline on the higher plane really consists in an unalterable confidence that it also exists in others, and that the individual is not risking his life for nothing. All this means added importance to a thorough disciplinary training, and to *esprit de corps*. That is, I believe, where the conscript soldier will fail. Only imperfectly acquainted with his officers and with his fellow-soldiers, he will tend at the first difficulty to remain lying under cover, because he has no conviction that they are likely to do much more than he is doing, and is not imbued by the sense that he is giving his comrades away by not doing more.

It is the magazine rifle, with its smokeless powder, which is at the root of this startling and imminent change in both tactics which I have endeavoured shortly to indicate. The modern firearm has been improved and perfected far more rapidly than the soldier. We want an army composed of men each of whom can be trusted to make the fullest possible use of the finest and most delicately-adjusted rifle that can be made. I have noticed a feeling in our Army that improvements in armament cannot be carried further, because the private soldier would not be able to avail himself of such niceties. This is indeed putting the cart before the horse, and it should be clearly understood that the private soldier of the future must be sufficiently educated to take every advantage of all that science can do for him.

Dispersion, concealment, and intelligent use of the ground are also essential to success for either the attack or defence, and this demands a high standard of individuality. There is a timid school of theorists who are eager to explain that the defence is more likely to be successful than the attack. If attacks are, indeed, to be conducted as they are now on the Continent of Europe, or as they were until recently in our own army, then this is undoubtedly true; but to my idea, under skilful leading, the attack has rather gained than lost by the new conditions. There is so much more scope for manœuvre, and so much more frontage of ground comes into the sphere of operations, that it is almost always possible to take up flank and supporting positions, from which a deadly fire can be kept up on the enemy's line of defence, whilst small bodies work

their way close up and effect a lodgment as previously described. The difficulties of estimating the strength of an enemy or the direction of his fire will give great advantages to a bold and vigorous General, who keeps on the move, and who is well served by his scouts and his patrols. The defence has then to extend its line, and the opportunities for a clever concentration to envelop one flank or to break through in the centre are largely increased.

This is hardly the place for an essay on tactics, but I should like to say that I, personally, have never seen a determined and skilfully-led attack fail when directed against a passive defence. From Nicholson's Nek or Elandslaagte to Doornkop and Diamond Hill it has always been the same story. The Siege of Ladysmith can hardly be quoted to the contrary, for it was only by successive determined counter attacks that Cæsar's Camp and Wagon Hill were retained on January 6. Notwithstanding, then, the obvious fact that, where the defence is provided with good cover and has in front of it a field of fire offering but little cover, the wider area of the fire-swept zone is locally in favour of the defence, I am a strong supporter of the attack.

Far from thinking that a great preponderance of numerical strength is necessary before an attack can be delivered, I think that under the new conditions it may often be possible for the weaker force successfully to attack the stronger. Even if the country is open, there will always be ways of getting across the fire-swept zone. If the worst comes to the worst, the attack can be delivered in the afternoon, so that it is becoming dusk as the men get within point-blank range. Or, failing this, a night march over carefully-reconnoitred ground will bring your troops up to the desired point. Or, again, rain, fog, or dust may come to assist the would-be assailant, and, of course, in wooded countries like Europe there is often good cover available. In any case, I am certain that an attack can always be brought off somehow, and that with good men and skilful leading the chances are greatly in its favour.

Granting, then, that the military supremacy of the future must be sought through the medium of a high standard of individual efficiency rather than by the preparation of masses

of semi-efficients, it is clear that it cannot pay to keep soldiers who are only partly educated up to the potentialities of their armament. It may be that in some cases we cannot get enough of the class of men who will be of use in the wars of the future at the rate of pay we offer. In that case, I say most emphatically, we must pay more, even at the cost of a proportionate reduction in mere numbers.

The ideal trooper should be able to travel by day or night, guiding himself by compass, map, or sun. He should be a finished horseman and a crack shot with his rifle. The ideal infantry soldier should have his body and brain developed to the utmost during his military service. If not properly educated before enlistment, the Army must put the schoolmaster to him and see that he is able to understand things, just as the gymnastic instructor must see that he is able to do things. He should be able to shoot up to the standard of excellence which is expected from the chamois-hunter, and march thirty miles when required. He should have a good idea of *terrain* and cover and of entrenchments.

It is impossible to teach such things on a cricket-field. The soldier can hardly be expected to take much interest in soldiering, or to see the sporting side of it, when all his training is carried out on strict make-believe lines. The victorious army of the future must have ample training-grounds, and if we cannot afford to hire or purchase them in these small islands, then we had better keep our troops somewhere where ground is abundant.

In war we revert to primitive conditions, and every sort of subtlety or trick must be recognised as part of the game. Such a trifling device, for instance, as constructing lines of entrenchment precisely at those spots where there is no intention of posting troops may cause the enemy to misdirect the whole of his preliminary artillery fire. It is an idea which would readily occur to a schoolboy; but such points seem sometimes to be considered frivolous, irregular, and almost derogatory to the regulation military punctilio.

The fondness of our officers for sports, such as hunting, polo, and shooting, assists them a good deal in such matters, for it must be remembered that war itself is, after all, a game, just

like any other game, only that the stakes are the most important we can conceive. Whether on horse or foot, fifty sporting young officers would prove a match for 300 average young soldiers of the present type, although the soldiers may be just as brave as the officers. Similarly, men of the stamp of University graduates, or young barristers, if taken to a country like South Africa and trained there, would, in the course of a year or two, be able to make short work of many times their numbers of continental conscripts. Quality above quantity should be our motto.

If the man in the street is asked, 'What is the lesson you deduce from the war?' he will reply: 'I deduce that all your barrack-square drill, and pomp, and pipe-clay is no use at all, and that a few farmers, possessing individuality, horsemanship, and marksmanship, proved, man to man, more than a match for you. I further deduce that the people of any country are able to defend themselves if they are fitted out with rifles and ammunition.' There is just enough truth in this to make it misleading. The value of individual initiative and individual campaigning aptitude is so greatly accentuated by modern armament, smokeless powder, etc., that an armed populace possessing these qualities may easily be more than a match for soldiers, in whose training education, initiative, and individuality have been neglected and repressed. But the soldier of the future, selected, trained, and educated as he might be in a voluntary enlistment army, should stand, in fighting value, as far above local levies or armed populace as a mailed knight of the Middle Ages did in respect to the peasants of the Jacquerie.

APPENDIX B

QUALITY *VERSUS* QUANTITY

I AM perfectly certain that what we want is a small army and thoroughly good. (14,371, *Lord Methuen.*)

Quality above quantity should be our motto. (13,939, *Sir Ian Hamilton.*)

Personally, I would sooner have a smaller force highly trained. I think that the margin of efficiency has been so enormously increased, and the difference between the highly-trained soldier and the poorly-trained soldier, especially with these modern firearms, is such that it would pay best to have a man who would take the full advantage of his weapons and of the ground. (13,953, *Sir Ian Hamilton.*)

I fully believe that if you get a higher class of man—highly-trained men—they can take the place of a much larger number than is generally supposed of semi-trained men. (14,024, *Sir Ian Hamilton.*)

I would sooner have fewer men and pay more for them. (14,076, *Sir Ian Hamilton.*)

I am not arguing for a smaller army; I am assuming that the nation puts aside a certain fixed sum, however large it may be, for its army. Having that fixed sum, I gather from what you say that you would rather expend that sum on a really efficient army than on a still larger army that is ineffective? —Much rather; there cannot be a question about that. But I have said this officially for the last four or five years. (4,204, *Sir E. Wood.*)

When that limit is reached, would you prefer that that sum of money was spent on having, as we have had in the past, a large paper army or a small effective army?—I would

prefer the small and effective army. (4,856, *General Kelly-Kenny.*)

In point of fact, I take it, to put it this way, that you would rather have your army 25 per cent. less in numbers if you could have them of a better class ?—Yes.

Even if you had to pay them 33 per cent. more money ?—Yes.

You would consider that a more efficient service ?—Yes. (14,685-14,687, *Sir A. Hunter.*)

Supposing you were organizing an army at a fixed sum of money, would you rather have an army, say, 100 per cent. strong, as our army is at present, or would you rather have it 60 per cent. of thoroughly-trained men, with the money spent on training rather than on the increase of numbers ?—I prefer 60 per cent. thoroughly-trained men. (14,370, *Lord Methuen.*)

Whatever army we have, if we cannot have a large one, it ought to be as perfect as it is possible to make it in the matter of training. (16,019, *General Hildyard.*)

I quite think it is a matter of quality and not quantity, especially in our own particular case. So far as one can see at present, I should say it was quality that was wanted. (16,320, *General Gatacre.*)

I know that during the later stages of the war, rather than keep my regiment up to full strength, I would sooner have 300 good men of good character, good men of every description, than keep the regiment up to 500 or 600, taking a worse class of men into my regiment; and I did so. (12,578, *Colonel Thorneycroft.*)

I consider that if Lord Kitchener had offered me at the end of the war 200 of the men I had had under me for a year or 500 men imperfectly trained, I would have taken the 200. (18,008, *General Plumer.*)

I can assure you that it makes all the difference to a commander if he knows that he has a couple of hundred men whom he can depend upon, and that he can send out a body of fifty men on their own account, and not be anxious about them until they come back. (18,019, *General Plumer.*)

It seems to me that if a man has got to be conveyed so far,

it is very bad economy to convey anything but a first-class man.

You would rather have half the numbers?—Half the numbers, and double as good, certainly. The good men and the bad men each consume the same amount of food, and cost the same for arming and clothing, and it is very false economy to take anything but a good one.

Even if he went at twice the pay?—That is so. (20,605, *Sir A. Conan Doyle.*)

APPENDIX C

QUALITY OF OUR PRESENT *MATÉRIEL*

THE bulk of the men are drawn from the lowest class. (9,116, *Lord Wolseley.*)

Taking the Army as a whole, I do not think it fairly represents the manhood of this Empire. The Colonials do, but then the Colonials are the picked men. (14,595, *Sir A. Hunter.*)

I always put down the excellence of the Australians and the excellence of our Volunteers, not to training—many of them were extremely raw when they first came—but to class. A man may not have seen or know anything of active service in his life—he may know nothing of soldiering—but if he is a well-educated man, and an intelligent man, as I think the higher class usually is, he settles down so much quicker. (16,587-16,588, *General Pole-Carew.*)

The highest praise I can give the regular soldier of to-day is to say that he is in no single respect inferior to his predecessor, and that in some he is greatly superior. He is more intelligent. He is more temperate. He knows his duties better. He has more self-respect, and he is more readily amenable to discipline. As a fighting man, however, he was not so expert when he first met the enemy as he might have been. His individuality had been so little cultivated that his natural acuteness was checked, and his want of resourcefulness, especially at the beginning of the campaign, was marked. (10,442, *Lord Roberts.*)

MENTAL QUALIFICATIONS

Have you found in your experience that the illiterate man is as good under discipline as the man who has a little educa-

tion ?—Certainly not. I think the educated men are undoubtedly the best. I am rather astonished to find how many illiterate men come to the Army now—men who can hardly read or write their names. (10,329, *Lord Roberts.*)

As to our soldier, I would say that his mental qualifications are not up to the general run of European soldiers, and the reason of it is that we get them mostly from a class where education is not looked to as much as it is in Germany and in France. (4,559, *General Kelly-Kenny.*)

The fact is, his mental perception is not up to requirements, nor is his education. (16,924, *General Kelly-Kenny.*)

It is not to be expected that men who join, as a proportion do, absolutely illiterate will develop into very intelligent soldiers. (15,992, *General Hildyard.*)

I do not think the intelligence is as good as it ought to be. (14,597, *Sir A. Hunter.*)

I do not think the class we recruit from are very intelligent men as a rule, and it is very difficult to teach them anything. (17,619, *Sir C. E. Knox.*)

Are you satisfied with the class of men you get now ?—No, except in exceptional cases. I think the Guards' recruit is a fine recruit, but I do not think that the infantry recruit is mentally or physically what we shall want for a three years' soldier. (17,834, *Colonel A. J. Murray.*)

To make the three years' service system a success the recruit on joining must be more developed mentally and physically. (17,816, *Colonel A. J. Murray.*)

Physique

The heavy sick lists suggest that our soldiers do not come from the healthier classes. The same may be said of the Militia; the Volunteers and Yeomanry seemed healthier. (16,924, *General Kelly-Kenny.*)

But there were an enormous number of men who suffered from enteric ?—Enormous. I had in my own hospitals at Bloemfontein at one time 3,000 men down with enteric. I gave evidence before the Hospitals Commission that went out to Africa on the medical question. When we get the men,

they are not healthy men. I do not think they are a strong class of men. (4,736, *General Kelly-Kenny.*)

And with physical defects?—Physical defects, owing to a very large proportion of our enlistments being in very crowded places, towns—particularly in Lancashire. I think that would account for it. (4,736, *General Kelly-Kenny.*)

If you get a wretched set of men like that, with bad physique, you may be perfectly certain that if they get into a tight corner they will not face it. (14,230, *Lord Methuen.*)

APPENDIX D

SIR T. KELLY-KENNY ON THE RECRUITING PROBLEM

THE following memorandum was written in August, 1898, by General Kelly-Kenny, then Inspector-General of Recruiting, with a view to its appearance in his annual report. It was too outspoken to be convenient to the authorities, and was therefore suppressed by Lord Lansdowne, and remained unknown to the public till the publication of the report of the War Commission.

'Adjutant-General: I discussed this question with you and the Commander-in-Chief, and in accordance with your suggestion I offer some observations thereon. I do not confine my remarks to the present state of recruiting as regards numbers; indeed, I may say that in comparison with recent years the present number of recruits (such as they are) offering themselves is satisfactory. On the other hand, compared with our requirements, we are badly off even as regards numbers, and also as regards standard conditions. It is unnecessary to go minutely into the position in which we would find ourselves in the event of our having to keep two Army Corps in the field during a European campaign, to form two Army Corps at home, and to garrison India, Ireland, and the Colonies. Suffice it to say that in this condition the numbers required to keep our forces full will be far beyond anything our present inducements will procure. It must be remembered that some of our sources of supply are either cut off or seriously impaired. We can no longer depend on foreign legions, the supply from Ireland and Scotland is inadequate, so that we have to fall back

for numbers on the waifs and strays in the populous districts of England. The question I ask you to consider is a more vital one than mere numbers—it is the class from which we should try to fill up the ranks of our Army. We as a nation have no actual experience of war under modern European conditions, but we learn from that of others that the individuals of an army in a battle sense are no longer the parts of a machine; on the contrary, European war at present requires, to insure success, a high measure of individual intelligence and training, patriotism and self-respect. We recognise that war is a progressive art, inasmuch as we spare no expenditure on the improvement of our armament, equipment, and training, yet we leave undealt with an improvement in the chief factor —the soldier. I have never been satisfied with the recruits in our Army. Many other officers share my views, though naturally we make the best of what is provided, relying almost entirely on regimental spirit and tradition. I have no faults to find with the training, except those which are inherent in and always check training and organization in a voluntary army. I would ask: (1) Do the recruits we get into the Army come up to the standard of modern European war requirements? (2) Is it possible in a voluntary Army such as ours to induce the required class to join it? (3) What are the inducements likely to succeed? (1) I have already given my opinion. (2) I think it is possible, but at a large expenditure and sacrifice on the part of the taxpayer. (3) The pay must be largely increased, larger than ever yet proposed. I am aware that the Commander-in-Chief, supported unanimously by the Army Board, proposed an increase greater than superior authority thought necessary. I was very doubtful whether even that increase, if sanctioned, would produce the results required. I am now convinced it would not. No less than 2s. a day, with free rations and groceries, will be sufficient. I go further: I say that so necessary is it to induce the right men to come into the ranks that it may be necessary to bid higher and higher till we get them. I have so often pressed the matter of provision of civil employment for ex-soldiers that I will not repeat now its importance, except to note that the improvement in the class will sensibly remove difficulties

and prejudices in this connection. In present condition, partly owing to prejudice, and it must be admitted a good deal owing to the soldier himself, with all our efforts we only get at the fringe of our desire to see all ex-soldiers well employed. It may be argued that at present the soldier is well paid, but, on the other hand, it will be admitted that the chief person concerned does not think so, otherwise he would come to us. I advise that this question be considered and pressed on the authorities, and pressed with persistency. If we are to take the field in the immediate future, and if the disregard of our warnings brings us face to face with the possibility of having to succumb to an enemy, it will be but a poor consolation to us military officers to know that we appreciated our own defects. It is not very easy to define what is intended by an improvement in the class of our recruits, but it will give an idea of what I have in my mind when I say that I believe the end would be attained if we could get into the Army the class of men now serving in the Volunteer ranks. These men possess all the desired characteristics, but unfortunately they are untrained. In the Army the soldiers are trained, partially so in the Militia, but they lack the other conditions. If it were only a question of an Army for home defence, it might be considered that we might largely add to the expenditure on the Volunteers, and require a larger degree of efficiency, but we still must provide a force to take the field outside the United Kingdom.—T. KELLY-KENNY, Inspector-General of Recruiting, War Office, August 12, 1898.' (4,545, *General Kelly-Kenny.*)

APPENDIX E

THE LACK OF TRAINING-GROUNDS

Owing to the want of training-grounds, and men to train, officers often have a good deal of time on their hands. (10,446, *Lord Roberts.*)

Soldiers trained under existing conditions cannot be got away from difficult positions, out of which intelligent and resourceful individuals trained to the use of these qualities might extricate themselves with comparative ease. (13,941, *Sir Ian Hamilton.*)

For the efficient training of regimental officers for war it is essential facilities should be given for working over ground in service conditions. This means that sufficiently large areas should be made available for the practice of exercises illustrative of war.

More than was ever the case before, officers and men require to be thoroughly trained in the use of the rifle and in the employment of ground. (15,972, *General Hildyard.*)

Our soldiers are drilled too much on the barrack-square; they are not taught to use their eyes. When they go route-marching, as a rule, there is no fictitious enemy, and there is nothing for them to look for. (15,665, *Sir C. Warren.*)

What we require at home are liberal manœuvring areas in each command, convenient to the troops, either acquired as a permanency or taken up under the Manœuvres Act of 1897. (16,772, *General Gatacre.*)

Manœuvres where there is really a scope, where men can be really taught to look out for themselves and to scout.

Do you mean manœuvres such as you can get at Aldershot? —No, I do not. (16,573-16,574, *General Pole-Carew.*)

Is the area sufficient at Aldershot to give the training that is necessary ?—Not for a large body of troops.

We tried very hard at Aldershot, when Sir Evelyn Wood was commanding one year, I remember, to arrange manœuvres by mutual agreement. The landlords were willing and the occupiers; that is to say, the farmers were most anxious to see us; but there were people called shooting tenants and shooting syndicates which absolutely stood in our way, and we were unable to get the ground. (15,977, *General Hildyard.*)

There is no field-firing possible ?—Well, it is possible, but it is difficult—at Aldershot, except on the ranges. (4,362, *Sir E. Wood.*)

As to the mounted infantry ?—They were very bad at first. They had no idea of country, and they were too cramped in all their movements from the training they had had at Aldershot. (17,574, *Sir C. E. Knox.*)

The only place I know that we have got is down at Salisbury on the Plain, and that is not very big. It is possible to go from one end to the other in a patrol. (17,608, *Sir C. E. Knox.*)

The Curragh itself is too small. (20,251, *General Talbot Coke.*)

How long do you think it requires to make a good artilleryman ?—It depends entirely upon the man and upon the facilities he has for being taught. At present he has hardly any in this country, only at Salisbury and at Okehampton. There would be no greater economy in teaching men for a war like this than having more land ranges where they could fire with live shell. The climatic conditions of Okehampton are very bad, and Salisbury, of course, is not an ideal training-ground either.

In what respect are the climatic conditions of Okehampton bad ?—It is nearly always misty and rainy. The rainfall is enormous. (18,690-18,694; *Colonel W. L. Davidson.*)

In my present station at Glasgow we have absolutely nowhere where we can go to train the men beyond the barrack-square. (19,582, *Colonel Macbean.*)

The preparation of a battalion under home service conditions for active service is, except at one or two stations, next

to an impossibility, freedom of movement, the most important factor, being almost unknown.

Recruits and young soldiers are grounded in extended order work in all its many varieties on a barrack-square, by which their ideas on the subject are as cramped as the space they work on, and these undeveloped notions they take with them to the larger ground when opportunity occurs. (19,557, *Colonel Macbean.*)

Have you thought out any system by which initiative could be inculcated in young officers better than at present? Is there any practical way of doing it?—One simply comes back to the facilities for training the men. If I had plenty of elbow room, and the country to send the men out all over, I would tell a youngster to go away at such and such an hour, or to parade and go away and do such and such things, and he would be bound to learn them; he could not help himself. There are many ways of training these young officers and teaching them initiative if one had the opportunity. (19,689, *Colonel Macbean.*)

APPENDIX F

THE WASTE OF THE SOLDIER'S TIME

You hope that there will be reforms in the training ?—Yes, but not so long as, when a young officer gets to his battalion, his men are away cleaning windows, carrying coal, and doing such things, which are all done in the most extravagant way. We fall in 240 men in the afternoon to carry coal round the barracks, instead of putting it into a cart with one man to lead the horse and another man to shovel it out. (4,175, *Sir E. Wood.*)

Our system is so bad that in the last year, since I have been in the Second Army Corps, within two months of my going to Salisbury Plain, and during the war, I found fifty-two men, all under a year's service, who have since gone to the seat of war—the war happily came to an end—who for four and a half months had done nothing but clean windows, prevent patients straying outside a given line (this is in a great hospital), and carry coals. All these men were under a year's service; there was not one of them who had been twelve months in the Army, and they had not done a day's duty for four and a half months. I am happy to say, after about eight months' application—supplication, I may say—I have got it changed now, and we have now got some Army Reserve men and civilians who are doing those duties. . . . I also found sixty-two young soldiers in hospital, who had never been drilled, nursing the patients who had come home from the war.

Then, as regards non-commissioned officers, what have you to say ?—There are twenty-four duty sergeants in a battalion. . . . But thirteen of those duty sergeants are always away.

Why ?—You can see it in the list which I have here. I will give you a striking case in point. I have been working at it for thirty years ; but when I went to Aldershot in 1889 there were still twenty-two sergeants walking backwards and forwards to the post four times a day. Knowing the Postmaster-General and his secretary, I altered that. I got the soldiers' letters delivered in barracks like any other householder's, and those twenty-two sergeants are now at duty. But when I went to the Second Army Corps last year I found that the Aldershot system had not permeated to the district. The Army is a conservative institution ; it takes a very long time to change it. (4,104-4,106, *Sir E. Wood.*)

If you take a battalion of infantry, about one-third of it are constantly employed in work that is not a soldier's work at all, and they practically get no training. That, with the three years' enlistment, to my mind, will lead to something very serious ; it will lead to disaster if it is continued, and if something is not done to have a regular system of training in the Reserve for the men who leave the ranks after three years. (4,562, *General Kelly-Kenny.*)

You may take it that at least 100 men are employed as officers' servants or in the officers' mess, the sergeants' mess, and all the different things they have to do.

Every regiment ought to have men who are not doing any duty at all for these jobs : either Reservists, or let a man, after he has done his three years, join what I would call the Regimental Reserves for fatigues, officers' servants, cooks, and so on ; he would serve on, and do nothing in the year except a course of musketry.

All officers ought to have Reservists as servants. (17,697-17,701, *Sir C. E. Knox.*)

I think we are much hampered in the training of our men by having to furnish the large number of 'employed' men that we are called upon to do. The consequence is that, as I have seen at Aldershot now, we have really very few men actually available for the work of the soldier. (18,014, *General Plumer.*)

If they (officers) have shortcomings, let us be fair, and not lay all the blame on them, but admit frankly the shortcomings belong to our system, and sometimes are our own. You cannot

make bricks without straw; and can anything have been more disheartening to a zealous officer than to find himself in command of a company reduced from various causes to a unit not worth commanding? Added to this, he often finds himself restricted to ground quite inadequate, or unadapted for tactical instruction. (14,247, *Lord Methuen.*)

The best young officers I have ever met were serving in native regiments in India—and why? Because they had commands in which they could take interest, plenty of ground for practice, and occupied positions of responsibility. It is this system which establishes the keenness in continental armies, and if we wish to stimulate emulation in our regimental officers the remedy lies in ourselves. (14,268, *Lord Methuen.*)

APPENDIX G

GENERAL FRENCH ON THE LACK OF DECENTRALIZATION

17,402. How far do you consider that that (decentralization) is carried in the case of the First Army Corps ?—I do not think it is carried far enough. The general officer commanding has not a sufficiently free hand as regards finance, for instance, and questions of that kind.

17,403. Is there anything you would like to say especially with regard to that ?—The powers of the general officer commanding to deal with questions involving expenditure are very restricted.

17,409. But, taking all the purely military questions as regards the training of troops, the moving of troops, within your own Army Corps district, and points of that kind, have you there an absolutely free hand ?—I have not.

17,416. Would you then be checked or restrained to a certain extent by the amount you have to spend on staff rides ?—Yes, I would.

17,417. Have you a special sum allocated to you ?—Yes.

17,418. And within the expenditure of that sum have you complete discretion ?—No. As I stated in the case of the cyclists, if I spend any sum in a manner which is not covered by some specific regulation, the sum spent will be queried, although it is spent entirely in connection with the operations in question.

17,387. But I suppose it would be a great advantage to an officer commanding a division, or even a brigade, to have his signallers mounted ?—My own opinion is that signallers ought always to be mounted.

But no actual steps have been taken, have they, to institute mounted signallers ?—Not as far as I know.

Is that a point on which you would have complete discretion in your Army Corps ?—No; that is a great question of principle.

That involves money ?—That involves money.

17,437. Then you do not consider that at present the decentralization which we have heard so much about is as complete as it might be ?—I do not think it is.

APPENDIX H

SUGGESTED DISTRIBUTION OF MILITARY COMMANDS IN THE BRITISH EMPIRE

United Kingdom	Group of six commands.
India	Group of five commands (including new Burma command).
Canada	One command (ultimately group of four commands).
South Africa	One command.
Australia	One command.
New Zealand	One command.

SUGGESTED ORGANIZATION OF COMMAND SYSTEM IN UNITED KINGDOM

General Commanding and Permanent Staff

Regulars: not localized territorially; liable to be taken out of command in peace or war: one or two divisions.	Militia and Yeomanry: localized territorially; liable to be taken out of command in great national war: one or two divisions.	Volunteer Infantry and Cyclists: localized territorially: three or four divisions.	Garrisons of fortresses: non-territorial.

APPENDIX I

APPROXIMATE PEACE AND MOBILIZATION STRENGTH OF PROPOSED MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT (BRITISH FIRST AND SECOND LINE TROOPS ONLY)

(A) Garrison and other sedentary forces:			
	Royal Garrison Regiment		24,000
	Garrison Artillery and Engineers		22,500
	Imperial Reserve Regiment		6,000
	Total		52,500
(B) On permanent war footing, India and Egypt			80,000
(C) Home Establishment: first and second line troops:			
(1) Peace footing.	Regulars (including *cadre* battalions)		100,000
	Militia and Yeomanry		110,000
	Army Reserve		160,000
	Militia Reserve		50,000
	Total		420,000
(2) War footing. In the field.	Eight divisions of Regulars		120,000
	Twelve divisions Militia, etc.		180,000
	Total		300,000
(2) War footing. Available for drafts.	Army and Militia Reserves		80,000
	Regulars and Militia left behind on mobilization		40,000
	Total		120,000

APPENDIX J

SOUTH AFRICA AND INDIA

To the Editor of the 'Times

'SIR,—Just a month ago Mr. Brodrick announced in the House of Commons the decision of the Government to keep a force of 25,000 men permanently in South Africa. That decision was, as he explained, arrived at on broad grounds of Imperial strategy, as the result of considering the question of reinforcing India from the naval as well as the military standpoint—a thing that, apparently, had never been done before. There were several points about the scheme, as Mr. Brodrick set it forth, that seemed vague and, perhaps, not altogether workable, as, for instance, the placing of the South African battalions on a special footing which should correspond neither to that of a "home" battalion nor of a "foreign" battalion. It was not quite clear how the scheme would affect the carrying out of the Army Corps scheme of 1901. Lastly, as regards the question of extra cost, Mr. Brodrick, instead of adopting the policy repeatedly urged in your columns of making an equivalent reduction in the numbers of men serving with the colours in the United Kingdom, suggested that it should be divided between this country and India, on the ground that India would mainly benefit under the arrangement. This last feature of the scheme was open to some doubt, and was at once severely criticised. But in the main all who were interested in Army reform welcomed the decision as the first-fruits of the newly-established Council of Defence, the first step towards an Imperial war policy.

'And now we are suddenly given to understand that the

scheme has fallen through, that this great decision of Imperial policy is to be reversed, because the Indian Government declares that it cannot afford to pay the £400,000 a year that Mr. Brodrick asks it to contribute. Lord George Hamilton shakes his head over the unwisdom of the Indian Government in rejecting so good an offer as the services of 12,500 men available at short notice for a mere fraction of what they would cost if they were in India, and believes they will live to regret it. Mr. Brodrick gets up and announces to the world at large that "this proposal was not made for the *needs* of the War Office, but entirely for the *convenience* of India!"

'A more astounding statement it would be difficult to find. The defence of our Indian Empire is, we are told, a local Indian "convenience." The "needs" of our War Office are—what? What is the purpose for which the British taxpayer pays 30 millions a year? Is it not to prepare efficiently for such serious wars as we are likely to fight on land, and to carry them through successfully? And where are we likely, if ever, to fight such a war? Where are our great land frontiers? There are only two—India and Canada. Does Mr. Brodrick suggest that we are more likely to go to war with the United States than with Russia? Or does he want his Army Corps for an aggressive campaign in Normandy or Hanover? Or, lastly, does he really still think of our costly Regular Army as intended primarily for the defence of the United Kingdom, and has he thus unconsciously let his secret thoughts slip from his tongue? When the question of Army reform was raised at the beginning of the session, there was one admission at least that the reformers secured from the Government in the most unmistakable form; and that admission was that, for the defence of these islands, the Government looked first and foremost to the navy and then to the Auxiliary Forces, but not to the Regular Army. The tasks before the Regular Army were Imperial ones, and by far the most important of these, as Mr. Balfour urged most impressively at the time in resisting the demands for the reduction of our total establishments, was to reinforce the Army in India to enable it to cope with any adversary. Mr. Brodrick himself, in his speech yesterday, complained that the whole organization of our Army was framed with a view to

Indian purposes. If those purposes can be better served by keeping the men in South Africa, as the Council of Defence have decided, surely it must be a War Office "need" to keep them there! Will the nation judge that the "needs" of the War Office have been well met if at the outbreak of a war with Russia and France it finds that not a single one of its costly Army Corps can be sent to India to avert disaster, because the Admiralty is unable to secure their safe transit?

'There can be no conflict between our "needs" and India's "convenience." The defence of the Empire is a single problem, and the efficient conduct of it is the need and convenience alike of every part. Nor can we separate the policy of the Empire, and declare that India, for reasons of her own "convenience," drags us into dangers from which we should otherwise be free. Have not we, on our side, interests, "conveniences," the maintenance of which involve danger and expense to India? Have our past struggles to stay the advance of Russia upon Constantinople, our present efforts to save Peking and Teheran from her clutches—efforts influenced to no small extent by the desire to preserve valuable markets for England's trade—no connection with the likelihood of war upon the Indian frontier? Is not the maintenance of the Indian Empire in itself an interest, a "convenience," to us as well as to India?

'No; our "needs" and India's "convenience" are identical. Each of us must bear our share of the burden, but, in any case, what is the right policy for the one must be the right policy for the other. Whether in this particular case India should contribute £400,000 to the force in South Africa must depend simply on the question whether India can afford it. But if India cannot, our own interest still demands that the force be kept there at our own cost.

'Whether India can afford the sum in question only experts can decide. Her military Budget is heavy, and has just been increased by £786,000 owing to the raising of the pay of the British soldier. There may, for all we know, be other necessary increases of expenditure. The Indian Army has always been readier for war than our own, but it is very questionable if it is as ready as it should be. Can we doubt but that Lord

Kitchener, with the warning example of South Africa burnt indelibly into his brain, has determined that no war shall find India as it found England in 1899, without proper reserves of ammunition, of clothing, of remounts, and without the organization or the equipment to cope with the wastage of war? These things are even more essential than reinforcements of men, and if it should be the case that they demand absolutely all the money that India can spare—at any rate, for the next few years—it is in our interest as well as in that of India that the money should for the present be spent on them rather than on the force in South Africa.

'That the force in South Africa is there in our interest is beyond dispute. What will an unsuccessful war on the Indian frontier cost? Not £200,000,000, but £500,000,000 or £1,000,000,000. And who will have to pay? Not India, but we. In this respect the South African War furnishes an interesting parallel. A year or two before the war the military authorities thought it would be desirable to have Natal properly mapped. They hoped that the Colonial Government would share in the expense. The Colonial Government did not see its way, and the War Office, sooner than bear the whole cost itself (it was a matter of several hundred pounds), left Natal unmapped. What that decision since cost us in blood and money, at Colenso and Spion Kop, and in the weary years the war dragged on, no one can tell. And whether Natal was wrong or not, it is on our shoulders that the cost of it has fallen.

'The extra cost of keeping a large force in South Africa is, therefore, worth incurring even if India refuses to pay. *But there need be no extra cost.* If the main object of our Army can be better served by troops in South Africa than by troops kept in England, then we can afford, without danger to India, to reduce the troops left in England till the saving thus effected equals the extra cost. Putting South Africa on the "home" establishment will enable us to meet the whole problem of providing drafts for India (the real factor that determines the size of the force in England), and yet effect a reduction in the total number of men kept with the colours. And that reduction is a necessity for quite other reasons besides that of balancing the extra cost of the South African force. At

present rates of pay, or anywhere near them, we cannot get a sufficient supply of full-grown, healthy recruits to man the Army we are trying to keep up. The class we have to draw upon is limited. But the policy the War Office has steadily pursued hitherto is like that of a man who has made up his mind to fill eight pails from a pool containing six pailsful of water. He can do it after a fashion by scooping up two pailsful of mud from the bottom of the pool and distributing it among his pails. As long as the water is not required it looks all right, and he may succeed in persuading his wife that there are eight pailsful of water ready for use. But when the water is wanted there are only six pailsful, and the mud is left at the bottom of the pails. There is probably also a mess. Just so Secretary of State after Secretary of State persuaded the country that it had so many thousand men to fight its battles. When the South African War came, and some 90,000 men had been despatched to the front, it came out that there remained behind another 90,000 who for various reasons could not be sent—in other words, so much mud. And in that respect Mr. Brodrick's scheme of 1901 is just the old scheme on a more ambitious scale, and when war breaks out we shall find, not 90,000, but 100,000 or 110,000, who will have to be left behind. And as to the "mess," we have had it in South Africa, and do not want it again.

'Whatever, then, may be India's final answer to the question of a contribution, let us hope that the good sense of the nation and of the Cabinet will insist that the policy deliberately adopted on broad Imperial grounds by the Council of Defence shall not now be revoked on grounds that have nothing to do with Imperial policy. We cannot afford in these days to go back to a separate War Office policy and a separate Indian policy, each carried on regardless of the other, and regardless of the naval factor without which both are helpless. And the naval factor has declared that it cannot guarantee to convoy reinforcements to India from England at the outbreak of war, but that it can guarantee to do so from South Africa.

'I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

'REFORMER.

'LONDON,
'*August* 14.'

APPENDIX K

MEMORANDUM ON NATIONAL MILITARY TRAINING BY SIR G. TAUBMAN-GOLDIE.*

THE second and far more serious defect in our military preparations for the war was in not having a sufficient number of trained men to furnish (by voluntary effort in a national emergency) the large reinforcements demanded both by the wastage of war and by the vast area of the operations. In close relation with this defect was the lamentable insufficiency of trained officers. Our report deals with the facts and results of these defects. It does not pronounce definitely how they might have been remedied. I believe these questions to be still vital to the security of the United Kingdom and of the British dependencies, and the remedy which I submit is national military education. Although prepared to furnish a detailed scheme, it is not possible in this brief note to do more than roughly sketch a general outline, as follows.

After two or three years' interval to allow of the perfection of existing volunteer cadet corps and the general creation of others throughout the country, every physically sound boy of seventeen years of age not serving in the Navy or the merchant service, and unprovided with a certificate (from the appointed military authority) that he is an efficient member of a volunteer cadet corps, would have to serve for a term in national cadet schools—officered, as are Woolwich and Sandhurst, by officers of the Regular Army. The length of the term—whether six, eight, or ten months—is a question for expert inquiry, but our evidence shows that for boys of the age of the junior gentleman

* The following members of the War Commission endorsed this memorandum : Lord Esher, Sir F. Darley, and Sir J. Edge.

cadets of Woolwich it might be far shorter than the time now needed to convert an infantry recruit into a trained soldier. For instance, Sir Evelyn Wood (Q. 4,355) says: 'Although I advocate great attention being paid to the training of our men, it is not possible to add a great deal to it with our men, whom you have to coax into the service, or they would not come at all; they would say: "Oh no, if this is military training, I would sooner be a civilian"; and our desires with regard to the training of the men are strictly limited by what the recruiting officer tells us is the character of training which would be agreeable to the population which we hope will come into the Army.' But, assuming the *maximum* term to be eight months, probably a very large proportion, consisting of the most intelligent and of those who had only just failed to secure previous certificates of efficiency, could be discharged as efficient after three or four months, thus diminishing the amount of tent, hut, or barrack accommodation required, which is the first material difficulty arising in any scheme of general military training. Much may be done to meet this difficulty by billeting and similar methods, just as undergraduates, for whom there is no room in college, are boarded out. But it may be confidently anticipated that the system of exemption certificates for efficiency would vastly reduce the numbers annually presenting themselves at the national cadet schools; for with such an inducement volunteer cadet corps would spread throughout the country, and bring the efficiency of their members up to the standard. Assuming that a balance of 100,000 uncertificated boys would annually join the national cadet schools, it is clear that a large number of trained Regular officers would be required for the work, who would be available for active service in a national emergency at home or abroad. This would meet Lord Roberts's objection to an increase in the present number of officers with each regiment, on the ground that they would not have enough to do. My suggestion is that officers should not be permanently attached to the national cadet schools, but that each regiment should furnish a quota of majors, captains, and subalterns in annual rotation.

In proposing this plan of national military education, I do not wish to depreciate an alternative scheme—the Swiss

system—which has received considerable public support. But it seems to me that the former would be as effective and not open to many of the objections which, rightly or wrongly, have been raised to the Swiss system. For instance, it has been said that military service, even for short periods, extending between the ages of eighteen and twenty-three, would seriously interfere with the avocations of young men during the most decisive period of their lives. Again, at that more advanced age, it would be difficult to prevent any tendency to acquire alcoholic habits, while stringent regulations, as at Woolwich and Sandhurst, would be practicable with boys of seventeen. Again, at this younger age it would be easier to trace identity and residence through the School Board lists. Again, boys of seventeen are far better fitted for instruction and discipline than at a later age. Finally, there has appeared a natural prejudice against the Swiss system on the part of many who take a warm personal interest in the Militia and Volunteers, on the ground that its introduction would lead to the abolition of these valuable forces.

The scheme of national military education would not tend to supplant the Militia or Volunteers, but, on the contrary, would make them both more popular and less costly, as the men joining them would not have to undergo the tedious drudgery of training as recruits, and these branches of the service, having only a very limited period for training, would thereby gain greatly in efficiency. This advantage would be equally felt in the Yeomanry, in which too much of the limited time of recruits has to be occupied in learning to shoot and in preliminary drill. The same consideration applies to the existing difficulty of obtaining suitable recruits for the Regular Army, and would also obviate the necessity for a substantial increase in the rate of pay.

I cannot deal here with a score of minor obvious objections to the scheme, beyond saying that most of them can be overcome, and that the few which prove insuperable must be accepted as the less of two evils; but I wish to meet two leading objections which will certainly be raised. The first is that it would add to the national expenditure. If it were so, I should still urge it, because the true measure of our military and naval

expenditure should be our national security., I am convinced, however, that the system would result in a great diminution of expenditure by permitting a large reduction of the number of men serving with the colours in the Regular Army, as well as in many other ways. I regret that space will not allow of my entering into details on these points, or urging collateral advantages, or dealing with the complicated question of providing drafts for India and the Colonies. The second leading objection is that the nation will not submit to any such scheme. It seems a sufficient reply to recall that, prior to 1870, the same objection was raised, with the same confidence, to the proposals for a system of national civil education. I have said nothing of the moral, social, mental, and physical advantages of the scheme, because the business of the Commission is confined to our military preparations. Moreover, these immense indirect gains to the country have been abundantly expounded by the advocates of all plans of general military service. But such gains are nevertheless germane to this note, inasmuch as their prospect will tend to overcome any prejudice against the adoption of national military education, if not in the form that I have suggested, then in some other form.

Indeed, I regret deeply being compelled to put forward any definite plan, which may savour of presumption, especially in the didactic form necessitated by extreme conciseness. But no other course was open to a member of the Commission convinced, as I am, that this particular defect in our military organization has cost the country no less than 100 millions sterling, that it was a principal indirect cause of the outbreak of war, that for some months it left the United Kingdom practically denuded of trained soldiers, and that it produced the most perilous international situation in which the Empire has found itself since the days of Napoleon. Only an extraordinary combination of fortunate circumstances, external and internal, saved the Empire during the early months of 1900, and there is no reason to expect a repetition of such fortune if, as appears probable, the next national emergency finds us still discussing our preparations.

APPENDIX L

SIR W. G. NICHOLSON ON THE HISTORY OF THE QUARTER-MASTER-GENERAL'S BRANCH

18,189. It will probably be of interest to the Royal Commission to contrast the system of the organization and training of the staff of the Army which existed at the time of the Peninsula and Crimean Wars with that which was in force at the outbreak of the South African War, and to consider what has been learnt in this matter from the practical experience of the recent campaign.

From the eleventh report of the Royal Commission which was appointed in 1805 under a special Act of Parliament to inquire into the conduct of public business in the military departments of the Army (p. 14), it appears that the duties of the Quartermaster-General's Department at that time comprised the movement, quartering, and encamping of troops, the disposition of troops in the field, the preparation of plans of defence, military surveys and reconnaissances, and the maintenance of a depot of military plans, maps, and memoirs, and of a military library. A Quartermaster-General's Staff was at this time assigned to all British armies in the field, and to all commands at home and abroad. In peace, Assistant Quartermaster-Generals of districts were, under the 'General Regulations and Orders for the Army,' dated 1811, charged under the orders of the general officer commanding with the duty of quartering, encamping, and the marches of troops. In coast districts they were expected to 'possess accurate information as to practicable points of landing, the best positions for defence in their immediate vicinity, and the particular winds and periods of tide which afford an enemy facility in approach-

ing the coast.' In all districts they were expected to have a perfect knowledge of the state of the roads and the features of the country applicable to defence; also of the course of rivers and the power of inundation. They were required to attend the embarkation and disembarkation of troops. As an instance of the nature of the work which was carried out under these orders, it may be mentioned that during the short truce of 1802-1803 officers of the Quartermaster-General's Department were employed in reconnoitring and sketching, in fullest detail and on a large scale, the South Coast of England from Portsmouth to the mouth of the Thames. Officers employed in the department, as a rule, received special training at the Royal Military College, which was founded originally at the close of the first French Revolutionary War as a school of instruction for young officers of the staff.

Excellence of the System

From the 'special instructions' issued in 1810 by the Duke of Wellington's Quartermaster-General to the officers of his department then employed with the Army in the Peninsula, it appears that their duties in the field comprised the movement of troops, their disposition on the march and in the field, including the throwing out of outposts, billeting, all reconnaissance work, and the provision of guides and interpreters. It was laid down that 'one of the first duties of the officers of the Quartermaster-General's Department is to acquire a knowledge of the country which is the theatre of operations of the army. This supposes not only an acquaintance with the nature and political condition of the country and with its principal features, but also detailed information on the following points:

'1. The peculiar nature of each district of the country and its productions.

'2. The rivers and lesser streams and the canals.

'3. Population, resources, accommodation of troops, etc.

'4. Roads.

'5. Camps and positions.'

It is apparent, therefore, that at this period the officers of

that branch of the staff which was held responsible for directing the operations of the troops in the field under the orders of the general officer commanding were practised and trained in those duties in peace-time by the exercise of similar responsibilities, so far as peace conditions allowed.

The result of this system may be gathered from a very interesting report on the British Army prepared in 1820 by a field officer of the French Engineers, M. Charles Dupin, in which he attributes the success of the British forces in the Napoleonic wars against his own nation in a great measure to the excellent training of the British staff. He says: 'The English, in bestowing extra attention upon the general formation and accidents of ground, have acquired great tact and an extraordinary facility of rapid judgment in the selection of advantageous positions on an important emergency. The excellence of their lines of battle at Aboukir, Vimiera, etc., may be adduced in proof of this.'

Gradual Decay

The duties of the Quartermaster-General's Department at the outbreak of the Crimean War had remained unchanged since the Peninsular War, and the 'special instructions' of the Duke of Wellington's Quartermaster-General, above referred to, were reissued from the War Office on March 20, 1854, for the guidance of the Quartermaster-General's Department. There is reason, however, to fear that during the long interval of peace the practical training of the staff had been allowed to fall into abeyance.

In April, 1873, an Intelligence Branch, under a Deputy Adjutant-General, was created at the War Office for topographical and statistical purposes. In July, 1874, the branch was enlarged, and placed under the Quartermaster-General, its head being styled Deputy Quartermaster-General. In 1882 the Deputy Quartermaster-General, Intelligence Branch, was replaced under the orders of the Adjutant-General, and in 1887 he was again called Deputy Adjutant-General, his title being converted the following year into that of Director of Military Intelligence. He remained subordinate to the

Adjutant-General until 1895, when he came under the direct control of the Commander-in-Chief.

As regards the Quartermaster-General's Department generally, no radical change was made in the allotment of staff duties up to the year 1888. In the Queen's Regulations for 1885, section 5, paragraph 81, the general nature of the duties of the Quartermaster-General's Department was classified as follows: 'The officers of the Quartermaster-General's Branch are entrusted with the duty of quartering, encamping, embarking, disembarking, and moving of the troops in every situation of the service. Their special duties in the field will be to regulate the order of march; to define the positions to be taken up by the troops; to conduct reconnaissances; to superintend the arrangements necessary for collecting information regarding the movements of the enemy and the local resources of the country; to maintain the lines of communication; to have a general direction over the railway, postal, signalling, and telegraph services of the Army.'

Practical Extinction

In 1888 the Commander-in-Chief was made directly responsible for the supplies of the Army, and in consequence of this the duties of supply and transport were taken over by the Quartermaster-General's Department at the War Office. It was decided at the same time, with a view to improving the status of officers employed on these departmental services in districts at home and abroad, to give such officers the status and title of Staff Officers of the Adjutant-General's Department, the previous titles of Assistant and Deputy-Assistant Quartermaster-General, except at Headquarters, being abolished.

The old Quartermaster-General's Department was thus completely reorganized, and, except as regards the movement of troops, became mainly responsible for departmental duties, especially those of supply and transport.

The Queen's Regulations for 1889, Part II., section 5, paragraph 71, divided the duties of the General Staff into two

groups, (*a*) and (*b*)—(*a*) including discipline, interior economy, drill, military training and instruction, musketry, signalling, camps, and schools; (*b*) arms, ammunition, clothing, equipment, supply, transport, movements, distribution and quartering, barracks, charge of garrison libraries, hiring of buildings and land for camps, ranges, etc., Royal Engineer services, works and fortifications. Subsequently, in 1895, so much of Artillery, Engineer, Ordnance, and Medical services as were included in the above were dissociated from duties (*a*) and (*b*) and dealt with separately, the officers of the (*b*) branch of the staff remaining responsible solely for supply, transport, movements, distribution and quartering, barracks, camps, and hire of buildings and land for camps, ranges, etc.

From 1888 onwards the officers appointed to the (*b*) branch consisted almost entirely of Army Service Corps officers, who, though possessing expert knowledge of the departmental portion of their duties—*i.e.*, those connected with supply and transport—had no special training or qualifications for the performance of the other staff duties originally appertaining to the Quartermaster-General's Department.

Consequent Failure in War

It resulted from this system that, when the South African War broke out, the officers of the (*b*) branch, who under the old system should have been responsible for the movement of troops and conduct of operations in the field, were not qualified to carry out those duties by special training and practice in peace-time. Even had they been qualified, they would not have been forthcoming, inasmuch as every Army Service Corps officer who could be spared for field service was needed for supply and transport duties, and to meet these requirements the establishment of the Army Service Corps had to be largely increased.

In India alone the system of maintaining a specially-trained Quartermaster-General's Department had been adhered to, and the Commissariat Department had been kept separate from the General Staff, although even in India, except at head-

quarters, the titles of Assistant and Deputy-Assistant Quartermaster-General were converted at the instance of the War Office into those of Assistant and Deputy-Assistant Adjutant-General. Officers, therefore, with Indian experience were the only officers who since 1888 had received practical peace training in the most important duties devolving on the General Staff in war. This defect was much felt in the conduct of operations in South Africa, and as a result in the present Army Corps organization staff officers, styled Assistant or Deputy-Assistant Quartermaster-Generals, have been provided, whose duties include the movement, distribution, and quartering of troops, concentrations and manœuvres, mobilization and intelligence, and the preparation and revision of local defence schemes. Similar changes will shortly be made in the staffs of colonial commands, and it is hoped that this reversion to the system in force under the Duke of Wellington will enable staff officers in Army Corps, divisions, and districts to be properly trained in peace for their work in the field.

APPENDIX M

LORD ROBERTS AND OTHERS ON STAFF WORK IN PEACE AND IN THE FIELD

Shortcomings of the Staff

As regards staff officers, the Combatant Staff of the Army in South Africa can hardly be said to have been entirely satisfactory. Shortcomings, to a certain extent, were unavoidable. The outlook for, and unprecedented expansion of, the Army affected the staff in the same way as all other departments. For an army of 90,000 men we had, probably, as many trained staff officers as were required. But when the Army grew to 250,000 and 300,000 men, the appointments had to be filled by men with whom want of experience was the rule rather than the exception. Those officers who had received previous training, either in active service or at the Staff College, generally did well; but the absence of a definite system of staff duties, leading sometimes to an overlapping of responsibilities, sometimes to waste of time, and sometimes to a neglect of indispensable precautions, was undoubtedly prejudicial to the smooth running of the military machine. Officers were often called upon to take up duties of which they had no previous knowledge; and while it was remarkable in the great majority of cases how quickly they became efficient, the mistakes that were made by the staff had most serious consequences. Many instances of indifferent staff work might be quoted, and it seems clear that the entire staff should be thoroughly trained, that a definite system of carrying out staff duties should be laid down, and that we should have enough trained staff officers to supply, in case of emergency, a large army. On

such occasions there is no difficulty in obtaining men of such good quality that they very soon become trustworthy soldiers. But staff officers cannot be improvised, nor can they learn their duties, like the rank and file, in a few weeks or months; for their duties are as varied as they are important.

Necessity for a Good Staff

I am decidedly of opinion that we cannot have a first-rate Army unless we have a first-rate staff, well educated, constantly practised at manœuvres, and with wide experience. Brains are even more important in war than numbers, and in an army which may contain a large proportion of men who are not soldiers by profession trained leaders are especially important. The provision of such leaders is a point to which we can hardly pay too much attention. In the South African campaign raw troops of good class who were officered by men who knew their business rapidly became efficient; and those units which had really good staff officers did far better work, at a much smaller cost of life and health, than those where staff officers were either injudiciously selected or inexperienced. The General Staff of the Army labours under a great disadvantage in consequence of the organic change in its constitution, introduced with the most praiseworthy intentions, in the year 1889. Up to that time the Combatant Staff had been divided into two distinct branches—the Department of the Adjutant-General and that of the Quartermaster-General, each with clearly definite duties. The arrangement worked admirably in the earlier campaigns of the last century, including the Peninsula, and it is within my own experience that in the Mutiny, in Abyssinia, in Afghanistan, in Burma, and elsewhere, it proved eminently adapted to the character and organization of our Army.

Changes in the Past Century

Undoubtedly, a weak point in our administration, from the Peninsula onward, was the unsatisfactory condition of the

Transport and Supply Department. This, so far as the 'Supply' was concerned, was corrected by the reform of 1889, the officers of this department being made combatant, and becoming eligible for appointment to the General Staff. With this innovation I have no fault to find; but it is not easy to understand why the distinction between the Adjutant-General's and Quartermaster-General's Department—a distinction sanctioned by the authority of Wellington, familiar to the Army, and tested in so many successful campaigns in all parts of the world, should have been so completely obliterated. Because a new department—that of A.-G. 'B'—had become necessary, it did not thereby follow that the two existing departments should be interfered with or their efficiency lessened. The duties of transport and supply are of great importance, but certainly not more so than those which have to do with the direction of operations, with marches, battles, and discipline. Under the regulations of 1889, the Adjutant-General's Department (except at the War Office) completely absorbed that of the Quartermaster-General, duties which had hitherto been entirely separated being now carried out by that branch of the staff which was entitled A.-G. 'A.' It was not, however, without exceedingly good reasons that the experienced soldiers who framed the old system made the Adjutant-General's and Quartermaster-General's Departments so entirely distinct. The duties of both were such as to give ample occupation, especially in time of war, to the officers who discharged them; and they had so little in common that an individual well suited to one department might be quite useless in the other. Thus, the merging of these two departments into one, for the sole purpose of raising the status of a third department, can hardly be called administratively sound. This opinion is strongly borne out by my experience in South Africa. Under the old system, the duties of the Adjutant-General's and Quartermaster-General's Departments were very clearly defined. In the Peninsula, roughly speaking, they were as follows, and they underwent but little change until the appearance of A.-G. 'B': 'Quartermaster-General: Operations, marches and outposts, encampments, etc., reconnaissance and intelligence, issue of operation orders, transport and supply. Adjutant-General:

Discipline, administration, issue of general orders and regulations, returns.' Referring to this table, it will be seen that the duties of the Quartermaster-General's Department were largely of an active character, while those of the Adjutant-General's Department were the opposite.

War Staff Duties must be Practised in Peace

I think that the wisdom of keeping the two separate, in different hands, can hardly be questioned. The practical result of assigning the performance of the whole of them to the same branch of the staff has been unsatisfactory, both in peace and war. In peace, discipline and administration have so preoccupied the staff that they have had very little time to give to their active duties, to the tactical instruction of the troops, to field-firing, the study of country, to the preparation for, and discussion of, field days and manœuvres. The tendency of the new measure has been to confine men far too much to their office and thrust the importance of practical training into the background. It would seem to have been forgotten that to work out exercises over broken ground, which will give useful instruction to the troops engaged, demands much hard work, and that lessons which have not been thoroughly thought out by the instructors are certain to be wasted. If our Army is to be properly trained in peace, we must have a department of the staff which can give its whole time to the business of instruction, to the study of ground, and to observation of the effects of fire. The officers belonging to this department should have a sound practical knowledge of both strategy and tactics, so that they would form a body of capable and useful umpires, and they should be constantly with the troops. In war, the merging of the duties of the Quartermaster-General's and Adjutant-General's Departments cannot fail to have a bad effect. Under a good Chief of the Staff, the initial confusion caused by officers not understanding the exact scope of their duties may possibly be reduced to order, and each individual made aware of his special functions. Yet the first few days or weeks before the

staff settles down may be the most critical of a campaign, and there is always the danger of men being put to the work for which they are least suited. Beyond this, however, is the important fact that if the staff is run on an automatic and familiar system, with definite duties attached to each post, friction, delay, and misunderstanding are much less likely to occur than when men are quite at sea as to which particular officer they should refer to for information or should report to. Things in war cannot be too simple or too clear. Moreover, if on every staff there were officers who had devoted their whole attention to strategy, tactics, and ground, and who were perfectly at home in directing the movements of bodies of troops, and in looking after camps, water, and security, it would be of very great assistance to the Generals. . . . For my own part, I am convinced that if the Army in South Africa was not, at the outset of the war, so efficient as it might have been, it is to be largely attributed to our departure from the staff system which served us well in even greater conflicts. (10,447, *Lord Roberts.*)

VIEWS OF OTHER OFFICERS

A system had grown up of regarding, during peace, current administrative duties as the more important part of staff work, and the preparation for war as mere theoretical work. (686, *Colonel Altham.*)

Staffs were hurriedly formed after the outbreak of war. Officers were new, therefore, to their duties, and unacquainted with one another. The machine did not consequently work as smoothly as it might have done had all its parts been fitted together and tried during peace.

Many officers were taken from regiments in the field for staff appointments and duties on the communications, thereby reducing the number of regimental officers at a time when there was much work for everyone. In the same manner non-commissioned officers and men were taken from cavalry regiments for clerks, orderlies, servants, etc., for divisional and brigade staffs. In fact, summing up, no organized, well-

trained, and complete staff took the field with any brigade or division. (19,299, *Colonel Haig.*)

Probably a good many of those things nobody would have foreseen before the war; as you say, it is easier to be wise after the event?—Well, I think, with all deference, anyone who had gained experience, certainly an Indian administrative experience, would have known those points as the *a*, *b*, *c*, of the work. Perhaps you will think that is rather strong language, but it occurs to me to be so. (13,074, *Colonel T. Deane.*)

The staff was beneath contempt really, looking to the orders and counter orders, and after orders, and the confusion there was in the staff. I am sorry to say I do not know much about the working of the German Army, but I fancy that a General Staff is the thing we want, and I do not think we shall get on without it. (16,601, *General Pole-Carew.*)

As regards the training of staff officers, an organized system of selection and training for staff officers should be introduced. At present a proportion of our staff officers receive a certain amount of staff training at the Staff College, but as soon as they are appointed to the staff their principal work is the routine and discipline of the Army, which has little to do with their work in war. Also, a considerable proportion of our staff officers have no technical staff training at all, and officers without any previous staff training whatever have sometimes been put in important staff posts. The result is that a very confused idea prevails as to what is required for staff work, and as to its distribution. This was specially noticeable at the beginning of the war.

In peace-time the most urgent work is often routine and discipline, and unless the above division is made, a busy staff officer is often obliged to neglect the more important work of training the troops for war. (17,527, *General Bruce Hamilton.*)

I think that in peace-time, somewhat on the line of the German staff, we should have certain officers who have nothing to do with the peace routine. I think that they should be attached to divisions or districts, as the case might be, and that they should supervise the training to a certain extent,

and be the confidential advisers to the General on all matters connected with tactical problems and manœuvres, and that they should assist in training the other officers to teach. (18,025, *General Plumer*.)

I think that is the teaching of history. You cannot improvise and organize an army in the theatre of war. (19,353, *Colonel Haig*.)

APPENDIX N

EVIDENCE OF MAJOR E. H. HILLS ON MAPPING REQUIREMENTS

THE following extracts from the evidence of Major E. H. Hills, the Head of the Mapping Section of the Intelligence Department, show, not only how backward we are in the matter of military topography compared to other countries who have far smaller responsibilities, but how hopelessly inadequate are the expenditure and staff at present devoted to this all-important subject compared with even the most rudimentary standards of efficiency. We spend on the Topographical Section of our War Office about one-ninth of what is spent by the French, and they employ just fifty times as many officers on that work. We employ 3 officers and 25 subordinates, at an annual cost of £6,500. The minimum establishment on which, in Major Hill's opinion, the work could be done—excluding India and the self-governing Colonies, and reckoning practically nothing for the secret surveying of foreign territories—is 70 officers and 340 subordinates, at a cost of £170,000 a year.

MILITARY TOPOGRAPHY IN FRANCE

871. 'In France the survey and mapping of their African possessions is in the hands of the Service Géographique de l'Armée, a powerful expert department which employs about 150 officers, and spends annually a sum of nearly £60,000. This department does some of the work which in England is the province of the Ordnance Survey—*i.e.*, it produces the French equivalent to our one-inch map. The larger scale

maps are produced locally in France. The Service Géographique de l'Armée has been engaged for some years in carrying out the survey of Algeria, a piece of work of the highest quality, which, it may be presumed, will eventually be extended over the whole French possessions in North Africa. It also produces an excellent general map of the whole of Africa on a scale of 1-2000000 (thirty-two miles to an inch), in the construction of which it utilizes the very complete series of sketch maps which the officers and local administrators in the various French colonies are compelled to furnish of the country round their particular stations. Independent of the money spent on the Army Geographical Service, France spends a considerable amount on colonial surveys, the funds of which are provided in the colonial Budgets. Thus a good survey of Madagascar is in progress, on which about £7,000 a year is spent, and much larger sums upon the Eastern colonies, Cochin China, etc. (in Cochin China alone France spends something like £30,000 a year on the survey), while certain colonial maps, as, for instance, that of the Congo, are produced by a geographer employed by the Colonial Office.

In Germany and Italy

'In Germany the colonial mapping is in the hands of an expert geographer to the Colonial Office, Baron von Danckelman, who collects all his material from the surveys carried out by German officers in the colonies, and incorporates them in maps which are produced by the firm of D. Reimer in Berlin, a firm well-known as the publishers of all Kiepert's maps. A similar arrangement obtains in the case of the German Foreign Office, which also has a geographer, Herr E. Vohsen, who is again in close connection with the same firm of map publishers. We have no means of knowing the annual expenditure upon surveys or map-making, but the resulting maps are of a high degree of excellence, well printed, and apparently of considerable accuracy—not comparable, perhaps, to the maps based upon precise triangulation that exist for some French possessions, but, considering the short time that Germany has been

interested in Africa, very creditable productions, and, as we shall shortly see, far superior to anything that exists for the British possessions. I have here a specimen of some French maps which, perhaps, might interest the Commission to see, as showing the sort of things that are produced. These are three sheets of a portion of Tunis, on different scales, one three miles to the inch, another a mile and a half to the inch, and the third a mile to the inch. Both France and Germany, while differing in their methods, appear to have two important points in common. Firstly, they insist upon the officers or officials employed in their colonies making sketch surveys of the neighbourhoods of their stations or of routes they traverse; and, secondly, they have an expert department, apparently amply supplied with funds, which incorporates this material into finished maps of the highest quality. They differ in that from our practice, which is only to hope that officers will furnish sketch maps. In Italy, where the colonial interests are naturally much smaller, the mapping work is done by a department apparently somewhat similar to the French Service Géographique, employing about sixteen officers, and spending about £20,000 per annum. Some maps of the colony of Eritrea, of a high degree of excellence, have been produced.

Central Topographic Sections Compared

'In connection with this point, perhaps, I might give a table out of another memorandum I wrote, more directly dealing with the Topographical Staff of the War Office, which gives the staff and the annual cost of the Topographical Sections of the War Offices of different countries. In France the staff is composed of 149 officers and 83 subordinates, and spent £57,000 last year; in Italy the staff is 16 officers and 120 subordinates, and spends £20,000; in Russia the staff is 46 officers or officials (the "officials" in the Russian War Office are equivalent in rank to officers in ours) and 112 subordinates, and we have no means of knowing how much they spend; in England we have 3 officers and 25 subordinates, and we spend £6,500 a year.

British Africa Unsurveyed

874. 'To summarize the matter, we may fairly say that, with one possible exception—*i.e.*, the gold-bearing area of the Gold Coast Colony—no attempt has yet been made to survey upon sound, well-considered methods any portion of any of the British possessions in Africa. This is doubtless partly due to the diversity in methods of government and control, and the want of any central regulating authority, which renders British Africa such a striking contrast to British India as regards this question of survey, no less than on other points. Thus, while the Survey Department of India is justly considered a model of efficient organization and technical skill, and the scientific mapping of the country is, therefore, in a high state of development, in the case of our African possessions we have to be content with the crudest maps, based upon all sorts of heterogeneous material and useless for all purposes demanding any approximate degree of accuracy. The evils which result from this condition of affairs are numerous, and might be enlarged upon at considerable length. For my present purpose it will be sufficient to remark: (1) That we have no maps of any of these countries in which the topography is sufficiently detailed to render them of appreciable value for conducting military operations; (2) we have no maps which would enable us to settle on the approximate alignment of a proposed railway, road, or even a telegraph line; (3) we are often in total ignorance of the geographical conditions which obtain in the neighbourhood of our own frontier lines, and we are thus unable to make a boundary treaty wherein the frontier is defined with such precision as to avoid the possibility of future misunderstandings.' When we realize that we have at present in Africa about 5,000 miles of Anglo-French frontier and about 3,700 miles of Anglo-German, the vital importance of this consideration becomes manifest. As we have already seen, there was at the time of the late war no proper map of any portion of Cape Colony. The same was also true of Natal, with the exception that an officer sent out specially by the Intelligence Division in 1896 executed a reconnaissance survey of the

country north of Ladysmith. There was thus in existence at the beginning of the war no proper survey of any part of the ground that ultimately became the field of operations, with the possible exception of Natal north of Ladysmith, though even in this case the reconnaissance survey, while highly creditable to the officer who carried it out, was, owing to the necessarily hurried execution, hardly sufficiently detailed for military purposes. The existing state of affairs cannot be regarded as satisfactory, and it becomes a pressing question what steps shall be taken to remedy it.

Good Maps a National Asset

'For our present purpose the main facts of the case stand out clearly enough. Accurate maps are absolutely necessary for military and administrative purposes, and cannot be obtained without surveys. It is useless to expect the administration of various Colonies to undertake such work, for which a homogeneous, scientifically-directed, central organization is essential. Such organization must be in the nature of an Imperial survey department for Africa, and the whole, or at all events the main portion, of the cost must be met from Imperial funds. Compared with the enormous value of the work it would do, this department would not be unduly costly, and as, apart from the immediate material advantage gained, the proper survey of its own territory cannot be regarded as other than a duty of a civilized and civilizing Power, it is to be sincerely hoped that this long-neglected work may be now at last taken in hand. The foregoing estimates deal with Africa only; but it should be clearly understood that the need for accurate maps of British possessions in other parts of the world is often just as great as in Africa. In the case of some Colonies there does not, indeed, appear to be any prospect of military operations being undertaken, but in such matters it is dangerous to prophesy. Preparations should be made to meet any possible contingency, and, under any circumstances, maps are required for administrative purposes. The question, therefore, arises as to whether the new survey department, should such be con-

stituted, should not be one to deal with all British possessions abroad, and not Africa only. It is not likely that we should, under any circumstances, undertake the survey of the large self-governing Colonies, such as Canada, Australia, and New Zealand; but there are large areas of British territory practically unmapped, such, for instance, as British Guiana, where it is hardly conceivable that the local revenues will admit of an efficient survey, and where the provision of accurate maps is now important and may at any time become urgent. Even if the new department were not formally charged with the duty of executing all such surveys, the mere fact of the existence of a well-organized central office competent to give expert advice, and able on an emergency to send parties of thoroughly trained topographers to any quarter of the globe, would be a national asset of the utmost value. The Ordnance Survey, which at present is the only body of which such a service could be asked, has been engaged so many years on the large-scale surveys of a close country that it has available practically no men competent to execute a topographical survey in a wild or tropical country, nor can such men be trained except by actual practical work. The Intelligence Division has lately asked for and been granted a small section, comprising two Royal Engineer officers and four non-commissioned officers and men, for the purpose of carrying out surveys of the ground in the immediate vicinity of British military stations abroad, and which is now doing a survey of the island of Mauritius. The work done by this section will be of great value for military purposes, but its annual output will, of course, be very small compared with the vast area of unsurveyed British territory.'

Topographical Section of the War Office

This would be only the surveying of British territory. But we may have to operate in regions outside our frontiers. Many of them are unmapped, and to survey them adequately would cost very large sums indeed, even if it were for political reasons feasible. Major Hills does not contemplate this, but

only a certain amount of reconnaissance, and the working up of all available material, maps, reconnaissance sketches, descriptions of routes, etc., in a topographical section at the War Office. A *minimum* allowance for this department would be some 13 officers and 53 subordinates, costing about £17,000 a year. In all, the military topography necessary for the safety of the Empire, both in the War Office and on survey in different parts, might be carried out by a staff of something like 70 officers and 340 subordinates, at a total cost of £170,000 a year. These are, in the opinion of the expert head of the Mapping Department, *minimum* figures compatible with efficiency or safety. And yet we calmly go on playing at doing topography with 3 officers, at an annual cost of £6,500, and wonder how it is our wars find us unprepared.

887. 'I should perhaps explain that mine is only an estimate for the survey of British Colonies. Our preparation for war includes also maps and reconnaissances of foreign countries. That is a different question. As to that I have also made an estimate of what would be a reasonable staff and establishment, if the Commission would like to have it.

888. 'Yes?—That would be the function of the Topographical Section of the War Office, whose duties are to prepare all maps required for military purposes, and the collection and utilization of all topographical and geographical information relating to any countries which are, or may become, important from a military point of view. Practically, this means the whole habitable portion of the world. As regards the duty of the Topographical Department of the War Office, its primary function is the provision of military maps, and the section cannot be considered as being in a state of efficiency unless it is always in a position to produce, at very short notice, a map of any portion of the globe, embodying all the latest information and printed in a clear, legible style. This cannot be done unless maps of all countries that are likely to become the scene of military operations are held ready, at all events in manuscript, with all new information added to them as received, and thus kept continuously up to date. The compilation or the putting together of a map

from different sources of information is necessarily a slow process, and cannot, with due regard for safety, be left for hurried execution on an emergency. For use on military operations, the maps provided must not only be good ones, but must be the very best that can be constructed; no delays in issue, no omissions, no failures to utilize any available sources of information, can be tolerated, nor can such maps be allowed to fall short in any way of the highest possible technical excellence. Unless the Topographical Section can supply such, it must be judged inadequate for its functions. The Topographical Department of the War Office at the present moment is, as I have already stated, 3 officers and 25 subordinates. It is quite obvious that such a staff is very inadequate. I have already given the comparisons with different War Offices, and I think a reasonable staff for a department of this character would be about 13 officers and 53 subordinates, costing about £17,000 per annum. Then the point arises at once as to what is the division of responsibility between such a department as this and the corresponding department in India. If the Indian Intelligence Division (the Quartermaster-General of the Indian Army) would undertake the military mapping of the whole of Asia, a contingency which does not appear probable, the staff of the section could be reduced by about 3 officers and the cost by about £3,400, but otherwise I do not see how any appreciable reduction could be made. I am inclined to regard the above as the *minimum* upon which efficiency could be absolutely guaranteed.

889. 'Does that include the self-governing Colonies?—That does not include any survey at all; that is a section which is to make use of the best available material, and is always to be in a position to produce a map, not based upon a survey, but which is guaranteed to be the best map that can be produced from existing material. That does not include any surveys either of Colonies, military stations, or anything else.

901. 'The annual cost (including the survey of the Colonies, etc., as well as the Topographical Department of the War

Office) would be about £170,000, and it would employ about 70 officers and altogether about 340 subordinates, roughly.

904. 'In estimating the amount which you say the survey would cost, over how many years do you spread that?—I do not spread that over any number of years; I take it at so much a year.'

APPENDIX O

LORD ROBERTS ON WAR OFFICE ORGANIZATION

10,737. THE great blot on the War Office organization and administration, in my opinion, is that the Secretary of State, owing to his being responsible to Parliament for everything that goes on in the Army, considers himself obliged to attempt more than it is possible for any one man to do, however capable and however hardworking he may be, the result being that his time is taken up with more or less trivial matters, while important questions, which demand much thought and study, are either delayed or indefinitely postponed. Up till 1895, when the present system was introduced, all the military departments of the War Office were under the control of the Commander-in-Chief, an arrangement abandoned on the ground that it was impossible for any one man to command the Army and also to carry on the work of the departments satisfactorily. Assuming this view to be correct, how is it possible for one man to be responsible for all the military departments (even if three of them are under the subordinate control of the Commander-in-Chief), besides the whole of the civil branch of the War Office, including finance, and, in addition, attend to his duties as a Member of Parliament and a Cabinet Minister? I should like to see the War Office divided into three branches—Military, Spending Departments, and Financial—each with a head who, while acting in consultation with each other, would be responsible to the Secretary of State. The Military Branch should comprise the offices of the Adjutant-General, Director-General of Mobilization and Military Intelligence, Director-General Army Medical Service, and Military Secretary. The Spending Departments would include

the offices now under the Quartermaster-General, Inspector-General of Fortifications, and Director-General of Ordnance, the head being an officer of recognised administrative ability, and without any political functions. The Financial Branch should be as at present. This subdivision of labour and responsibility would, I believe, greatly simplify the work now devolving on the Secretary of State and the Commander-in-Chief, and give them more time to devote to the more important problems of military efficiency and Imperial defence.

The arrangement will probably be objected to on the ground that, the Secretary of State having frequently to answer Parliamentary questions on all sorts of subjects connected with the Army, it is essential that he should be acquainted with everything going on in the Army. But to this I would reply that, under the present or any conceivable system, such detailed knowledge and responsibility are impossible. No one could carry in his mind such a mass of heterogeneous minutiæ; and when questions are asked in Parliament, the Secretary of State is bound to get the information to enable him to reply to them from subordinate officers who have no responsibility. Surely, if it were explained to Parliament that decentralization, which is being so constantly advocated, involves delegation of authority and responsibility, the impossibility of the Secretary of State being conversant with and responsible for every detail of Army administration would be recognised. It seems to me that the proper course for the Secretary of State to accept when questions are asked would be to inform Parliament that the action under discussion was taken by such or such a subordinate official, acting within the power delegated to him, who must be held responsible for his own action, the Secretary of State at the same time expressing his approval or disapproval of that action, and, if the latter, stating that he is taking steps to rectify it, instead of conveying the impression that no course could or should be adopted without his cognizance.

There is another change I strongly advocate, and that is the transfer of certain duties now performed by the erroneously-styled Quartermaster-General to the Director-General of Mobilization and Military Intelligence, who is, strictly speak-

ing, and ought to be called, Quartermaster-General. The Quartermaster-General has of late years been converted into a Director-General of Supply and Transport, and has hardly anything to do with the duties of the General Staff of the Army. He controls the Army Service Corps, the Pay Department, and the Remount Department. The more legitimate staff duties connected with organization, mobilization, distribution of the Army, military intelligence, schemes of offensive and defensive operations, reconnaissance, etc., are assigned to the Director-General of Mobilization and Military Intelligence. Thus, while this officer carries out the work properly appertaining to the Quartermaster-General, the so-called Quartermaster-General really performs the duties of a Commissary-General-in-Chief. In one particular only is the Quartermaster-General entrusted with General Staff functions—namely, as regards the issuing of orders for the movement of troops; but this duty should be transferred to the Director-General of Mobilization and Military Intelligence, who is at present charged with a cognate duty—viz., the distribution of the Army at home and abroad. I am in favour of calling officials by names descriptive of the duties assigned to them, and I am of opinion that the Director-General of Mobilization and Military Intelligence should be styled Quartermaster-General, and the head of the present Quartermaster-General's Department Director-General of Supply and Transport.

APPENDIX P

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE HARTINGTON COMMISSION.

THE following extracts from the report of the Hartington Commission, published in 1891, will give a sufficient idea of the nature of their recommendations for the reorganization of the War Office.

ABOLITION OF THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF

64. 'We have already pointed out (paragraph 57) that the only responsible adviser of the Secretary of State is the Commander-in-Chief, who has a multitude of other duties to perform—duties recently largely increased—and that most of the other principal professional officers have neither the time nor the official position which would qualify them to act as responsible advisers of the Secretary of State on important questions of military policy.

65. 'One of the immediate results of this defect is that wholesale recourse is had to committees appointed to deal with certain classes of questions. It is, in fact, by means of the agency of these committees that the attempt is made to supply the want of consultative power which characterizes the administration of the War Office. In practice this system cannot and does not work well.

73. 'We consider that a definite and direct responsibility to the Secretary of State should be placed upon the heads of departments, for their several administration, as is the case with the naval lords at the Admiralty. Under the present system, as we have pointed out, the only real responsibility

appears to rest on the Commander-in-Chief, who alone would be accountable to the Secretary of State even for such a matter as the defective design of a heavy gun. We do not find that this centralization of responsibility exists in the administration of the armies of any of the Great Powers of Europe, and we consider that it cannot conduce to efficiency.

86. 'We desire further to point out that the present constitution of the office of the Commander-in-Chief involves a certain anomaly when the country is at war. In this case a Commander-in-Chief in the field is at once appointed by the Cabinet, and acts under the orders of the Secretary of State for War, to whom, in accordance with the Queen's Regulations, he reports directly. The functions of the Commander-in-Chief thus appear to lapse to a considerable extent.

92. 'These executive duties of the command and inspection of troops in Great Britain might, we think, be conferred upon a "General Officer commanding the Forces in Great Britain," who would carry on his work outside the War Office, as is now done by the General Officer commanding the Forces in Ireland, and who would take over the duties of inspecting the Royal Engineers in Great Britain, which now devolve on the Inspector-General of Fortifications.

Creation of a General Staff

71. 'We are informed that in the military systems of all the great Powers of Europe there is a special Department of the Chief of the Staff, freed from all executive functions, and charged with the responsible duty of preparing plans of military operations, collecting and co-ordinating information of all kinds, and generally tendering advice upon all matters of organization and the preparation of the Army for war. We consider that by the creation of such a central organizing department the military defence of the Empire would be considered as a whole, and its requirements dealt with in accordance with a definite and harmonious plan.

72. 'This department would include the present Intelligence Division, which deals with the collection and distribution of

foreign intelligence and with the defence of the Empire other than the United Kingdom, and such part of the Adjutant-General's Division as deals with the mobilization of troops and the defence of the United Kingdom. A Chief of the Staff should be appointed for five years, capable of renewal, and be made responsible for the following duties:

'(*a*) To advise the Secretary of State on all matters of general military policy, and all questions as to the strength, distribution, and mobilization of Your Majesty's land forces, and the relative importance of various services put forward by the heads of departments.

'(*b*) To collect and co-ordinate all military information.

'(*c*) To prepare and revise, from time to time, a general scheme for the military defence of the Empire, and to examine the estimates with a view to insure that they are framed in harmony with that scheme.

'(*d*) To prepare plans of action in certain contingencies.

'(*e*) To communicate directly with the First Naval Lord of the Admiralty (see paragraph 32) on all matters involving inter-departmental policy, to examine all correspondence with other departments of State, and to conduct all correspondence with general officers commanding on questions of military policy.

'(*f*) To lay before the Secretary of State an annual report stating clearly all the military requirements of the Empire.'

Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman's Objections

'In this country there is in truth no room for "general military policy" in this larger and more ambitious sense of the phrase. We have no designs against our European neighbours. Indian "military policy" will be settled in India itself, and not in Pall Mall. In any of the smaller troubles into which we may be drawn by the interests of some of our dependencies, the plan of campaign must be governed by the particular circumstances, and would be left (I presume and hope) to be determined by the officer appointed to direct operations. And as to the defence of these islands, and of our depots and coaling-stations,

although there may have been some slackness and delay in the past, we have reason to believe that now, if full provision has not been yet made, complete schemes at least have been matured for protection against attacks which cannot vary greatly in character. I am therefore at a loss to know where, for this larger branch of its duties, the new department could find an adequate field in the circumstances of this country. There might indeed be a temptation to create such a field for itself, and I am thus afraid that, while there would be no use for the proposed office, there might be in it some danger to our best interests.'

APPENDIX Q

LORD ESHER'S MEMORANDUM ON WAR OFFICE ORGANIZATION*

THE main defects in the organization of the War Office elicited by the evidence are, first, the want of co-ordination between the branches of that department, and the consequent weakening of the influence of the Secretary of State with his colleagues in the Government; and, secondly, the absence of a proper system of inspection, insuring that the military policy of the Secretary of State, sanctioned by the Cabinet and by the votes of Parliament, is carried into effect.

When the Secretary of State has made unsuccessful attempts from time to time to obtain the assent of the Cabinet to expenditure necessary in the interests of the country, his efforts have been weakened by his failure to show a consensus of military opinion in favour, as the First Lord of the Admiralty continually does, of the policy which he recommends.

The condition in 1899, as disclosed in Sir H. Brackenbury's Memorandum, of our armaments, of our fortresses, of the clothing department, of the transport of the Army Medical Corps, of the system of remounts, shows that either the Secretary of State was culpable of neglect or that he was in ignorance of the facts.

I. A WAR OFFICE COUNCIL

In order to secure co-ordination between the branches of the War Office, and to strengthen thereby the hands of the Secre-

* Lord Esher's views were supported by Sir G. Taubman Goldie and Sir J. Jackson.

tary of State, the only practical remedy would appear to be the establishment of a Council or Board on the lines of the Admiralty. It is worth while to remark, in this connection, that administration by a Board has been found to work successfully in every great commercial enterprise, in the Government of India, at the Admiralty, and—if the Cabinet may not inaptly be designated a Board—in the Government of the Kingdom. Two important underlying causes have contributed to the evolution of this kind of administration. First, that discussion in council is the most successful method of obtaining a right solution of difficult problems; and, secondly, that a collective appeal to external opinion, whether in the shape of the Treasury, or Parliament, or the public, carries more weight than the dictum or arguments of one man, however ingenious and however capable.

The administration of the Admiralty has often been favourably compared with that of the War Department. There cannot well be an inherent superiority in sailors to soldiers as administrators, nor in the choice of First Lords of the Admiralty to Secretaries of State for War. Further, the Board of Admiralty have appealed more successfully both to Chancellors of the Exchequer and to Parliament than has the Secretary of State for War, and although this may partly be accounted for by the greater consideration attached properly to the needs of the Navy, it is not the sole reason for the greater facility with which that service has obtained large grants of public funds; for, in addition to money voted, it has invariably secured a higher degree of public confidence.

In face of these facts, it may truthfully be contended that the sound administration of the Admiralty results from the system under which the First Lord determines all naval questions in council with his principal advisers, after formal discussion, and is thus enabled to approach the Treasury, the Cabinet, and Parliament with the force of professional opinion behind him.

The Board of Admiralty is composed of the First Lord, the First and Second Naval Lords, the Third Sea Lord, the Junior Naval Lord, the Civil Lord, the Financial Secretary, and the Under-Secretary of State.

A War Office Council might be constituted to comprise the Secretary of State, the Adjutant-General, the Quartermaster-General, the Director-General of Ordnance, the Director-General of Military Intelligence, the Financial Secretary, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary, and the Under-Secretary of State.

The administrative work of the Admiralty is distributed in departments under the control of the members of the Board, and the work of the War Office could be divided in a similar manner. To the Adjutant-General should be assigned the movements of troops, the framing of military regulations affecting discipline, training, military education, promotion, and appointments. All the subsidiary branches controlling these matters should be subordinate to that officer. The Quartermaster-General should control, with one exception, the spending departments of the Army. The Inspector-General of Fortifications, the Transport, Commissariat, and Clothing Departments, the Army Medical Department, should all be subsidiary branches of his department. The Director-General of Ordnance should be responsible for armament. The Director-General of Military Intelligence should have no executive functions, and that important officer's duties should be limited to the framing of schemes of defence, the initiation and working out of changes from time to time, as necessity requires, in the organization of the Army, the preparation of maps, and the collection of military information in all parts of the world.

It may be said that the advice of these officers is at the service of the Secretary of State under the existing system, but more than this is required.

Discussion in the presence of the Secretary of State, if possible agreement, or an acceptance of the decision of a majority, are essential elements in the military administration of the War Office if the Secretary of State for War's policy is to carry, among his colleagues and in Parliament, the weight which attaches to the views of the First Lord of the Admiralty.

A marked characteristic of the Navy is the loyalty of naval officers to each other and to their chiefs; while in the Army, from the junior ranks upwards, a spirit of criticism has become

a military tradition, which is mischievous to the service and may take years to eradicate.

In addition to the advantages of administration by council, already referred to, may be added the probability that agreement, or loyalty to decisions once taken, in the highest places, may gradually tend to produce a similar state of feeling throughout the body of Army officers.

II. Abolition of the Commander-in-Chief

It will have been noticed that it is not proposed to include the Commander-in-Chief among those forming the Army Board or Council.

Since the death of the Duke of Wellington the position of the Commander-in-Chief has been gradually becoming more anomalous, until a crisis was reached in the year 1899, upon which it is unnecessary to dilate. The speeches of Lord Lansdowne and Lord Wolseley upon their mutual relations in the House of Lords will not readily be forgotten.

The tact of the Duke of Cambridge, and his position as a member of the Royal House, just rendered possible a system within the War Office which subsequent arrangements have proved to be impossible if the efficiency of the War Department is ever to be established.

The only practical remedy is the abolition of the office of Commander-in-Chief, as recommended by the Hartington Commission, and the appointment of a general officer commanding the Army removed from the War Office into a distinct building, possibly the Horse Guards, with a new definition, by Order in Council, of his duties and responsibilities. He might be entrusted with the discipline of the Army, but his principal functions should be those of an Inspector-General of His Majesty's Forces, and he should be responsible to the Secretary of State.

His position would be analogous to that of an auditor in the region of finance. He should have to certify annually in writing as to the actual efficiency and condition of whatever military organization has been settled by the War Department

and by Parliament. That is to say, if two Army Corps, or three, or six, are the large units agreed to by Parliament, he should certify annually that they are efficient and complete. Further, he should report and certify as to the condition of fortresses, ordnance, magazines, clothing, stores, equipment, hospitals, etc., and he should be held responsible for the accuracy of his certificates.

Hitherto the Secretary of State has been forced to rely upon the chiefs of departments, whose duty it is to organize those departments, for information as to their efficiency, with results at once misleading and dangerous. The object of the change suggested is to give the Secretary of State an inspecting officer of the highest rank and military qualifications, whose principal functions would be to keep him informed of the actual condition of an organization for which that officer was not himself responsible. The importance of such a check or audit cannot well be exaggerated.

One advantage which would accrue to the military organization of the Army by the abolition of the Commandership-in-Chief should not be overlooked. Under the existing system a soldier appointed to that office, except he has reached the final stages of his career, is practically shelved after a tenure of five years. Reappointment is a course of procedure undesirable for many obvious reasons. Here again the Admiralty may be taken as a model, for there is no naval command so clearly superior to all others that after his tenure of it an officer need be removed from the active list while still fit for service.

In the Army, on the other hand, were an officer in the prime of life appointed Commander-in-Chief under existing conditions, his further employment would be a matter of considerable difficulty. This is a point worthy of careful consideration.

To summarize, therefore, these recommendations, they are briefly :

First, to reorganize the War Office Council, and to define more clearly their functions as an advisory and executive Board presided over by the Secretary of State, in whom, however, final responsibility to Parliament must be reserved.

Secondly, to decentralize internally the War Department

by a rearrangement of duties, under the respective members of the Board, abolishing the cross jurisdiction now existing.

Thirdly, to abolish the Commandership-in-Chief and to appoint a general officer commanding the Army, responsible to the Secretary of State for the efficiency of the military forces of the Crown.

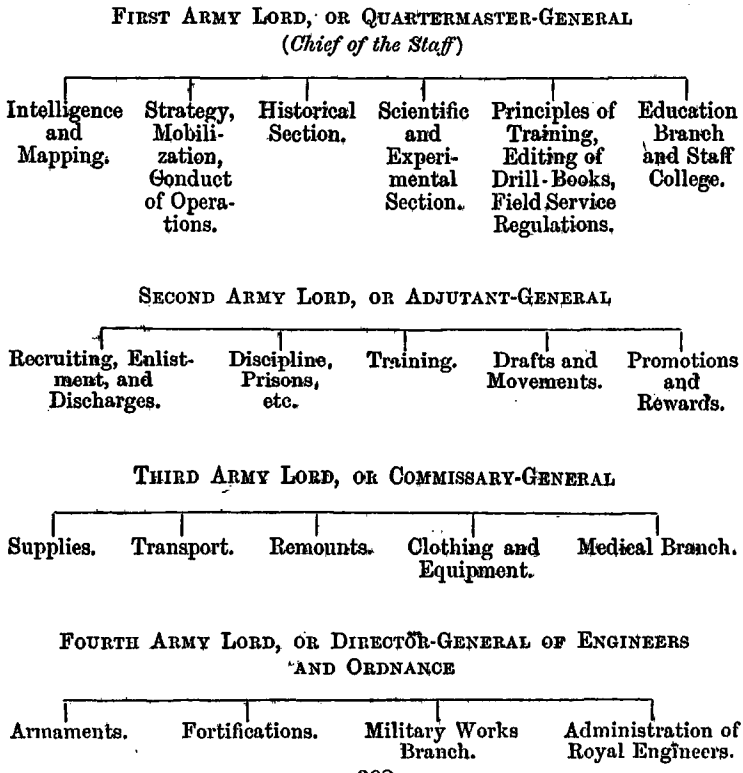
VIEWS OF SIR GEORGE TAUBMAN GOLDIE

In this matter I agree generally with the note of Lord Esher. I feel, with the Hartington Commission, that the retention of that office as an administrative post is incompatible with an effective system of administration of the Army by a permanent War Office Board or Council, such as the report recommends or as exists at the Admiralty. To adopt Lord Wolseley's simile (in his Memorandum to Lord Salisbury of November 12, 1900), the Commander-in-Chief becomes 'a fifth wheel to a coach.' So large a fifth wheel is either rigid and follows its own course, which the other wheels have to follow, or is loose and obstructs the other wheels. On the other hand, I doubt if public opinion is ripe for the alternative system, advocated by Lord Wolseley and recently suggested by Lord Rosebery, of selecting the most capable soldier as a War Minister sitting in the Cabinet, but holding aloof from general politics. Yet it is only fair to point out that in other countries under Parliamentary institutions expert Ministers, whether of Marine, Foreign Affairs, or War, have held office (without apparent friction) in successive Cabinets of very diverse political views. The attempt in 1895 to combine the two opposing principles of centralization in an individual soldier and devolution to a Board of soldiers, under the general control of a civilian Secretary of State, did not work satisfactorily, and in 1900 an attempt was made to readjust the machinery. But I submit that the present system could not work well under normal conditions. Any success it has attained has been due to the exceptional position of Lord Roberts in the estimation of the nation, the Army, and the Secretary of State. I look forward with anxiety to the time following his retirement; and although I heartily concur in the hope (expressed in paragraphs 270 and

272 of the Report) 'that the state of affairs in 1899 cannot recur,' this hope, on my part, is a wish and not an expectation. I desire to disclaim expressly any suggestion of attaching blame to the Cabinet or the Secretary of State in 1895. Public opinion at that time was strongly opposed to the continuance of centralization in the Commander-in-Chief. Yet the Cabinet could hardly resist the special pressure then put upon them to retain the office, and compromise is a favourite panacea. But I submit that, while in legislation, where the objective is generally statical equilibrium, compromise is both necessary and valuable, it can only produce inertia in an administrative system—especially for our fighting services—where the main objective is dynamic force.

APPENDIX R

PROPOSED DISTRIBUTION OF WORK, IN ITS MAIN BRANCHES, AMONG THE MILITARY MEMBERS OF THE ARMY BOARD



APPENDIX S

SIR EVELYN WOOD ON PROMOTION BY SELECTION

4,245. ABOUT promotion by selection: I understand you to be in favour of that?—Yes.

4,246. A great many people are, but how are you going then to prevent promotion by nepotism?—I quite admit that the difficulties are enormous, but I can give you my views upon it in a written form. I wrote this to the Military Secretary towards the end of the year 1900: 'As a new Commander-in-Chief has been nominated, I suppose Lord Wolseley will prefer not to make any drastic changes, but I should like you to ask him to record an opinion on the following suggestions. In spite of your endeavours and of the Commander-in-Chief's strong desire to promote none except good officers, we have not really been able to carry out the principle of selection in promotion, mainly on the grounds of the inadequacy of confidential reports. Nobody who has had much insight as to the working of our office can avoid noticing the failure of a very large number of commanding officers who have been wafted up into command simply because "there is nothing known against them." Lord Roberts has recently removed several officers from their commands, and General Sir Redvers Buller, in advocating the promotion of a Captain and Brevet-Major to the command of a battalion' (that is going over four or five), 'dilates on the failure of many who have come to his notice. It seems to me that officers can generally be divided into the three following categories: (*a*) Those whose fitness for advancement is undoubted; (*b*) colourless men against whom "nothing is known"; (*c*) men who have a bad record, or whose unfitness is apparent. There is little alternative in dealing with classes

(*a*) and (*c*), but class (*b*), which necessarily represents the bulk of officers, presents many difficulties. Although promotion to second in command and to command is ostensibly by "selection," it would be more accurate to describe our procedure as one for the elimination of class (*c*). In reality, promotions of officers under class (*b*) are carried out generally because "nothing is known against them," whereas I contend that they should only be promoted if something is known in their favour. The burden of proving a case for refusing promotion at present rests with the Commander-in-Chief, and unless a strong case is made out which will stand the test of questions in the House of Commons, made by interested parties, it is difficult to refuse promotion, while confidential reports are made by the present class of colonels and generals on full pay, whose early impressions were vitiated. In result, comparatively few officers are refused promotion on the grounds of inefficiency only, and some specific act of neglect of duty, or often worse, must be proved against them. This, of course, is the outcome of our traditional system. Promotion by seniority was maintained officially as long as possible, and amongst the seniors is still desired. I submit that the time is come when it might be possible to reverse the process, and to arrange that no officer will be promoted unless qualified. The retention of young officers in the service is probationary for three years. I submit that commanding officers who now frequently record a subaltern's skill at polo, with rifle or gun, or his success in society, should be called upon to report annually on the three senior subalterns' (I did not want to go down below three), 'showing whether they are likely in every respect to perform all the duties of a captain in a satisfactory manner. Their power of instructing men and getting work well and cheerfully performed should be noted. I urge further that no captain be promoted to field rank unless a case is made out for his promotion. This would shift the *onus probandi* on to the officer, who would have to prove that he has so far raised himself above his fellows as to merit promotion. An officer seldom reaches the top of the list of captains in the cavalry in less than twelve years, the artillery in less than eighteen years, and in the infantry in less than fifteen years,

in which time, I think, it would not be too much to expect that an officer of from twelve to fifteen years' service, if of any value, ought to have done something in that time to show his worth. He may have been an adjutant, have passed through the Staff College; he may have rescued a squadron, battery, or company, or a garrison or regimental institute from chaos, and placed it on a sound footing; he may have successfully trained his squadron, battery, or company in service work or in musketry, have excelled in fire discipline, observation of fire, tactical handling, and in administration of a unit, or in cavalry or Horse Artillery in rapidity of decision, for two or more years. All mounted officers of mounted branches should in that time be known as good, indifferent, or bad horse-masters' (which is our greatest failing of all). 'An officer may have shown himself remarkable in signalling work, in recruiting, or he may have shown fitness for command as an explorer in unknown countries' (so that my sympathies are wide enough). 'He may have done well on active service, done good staff work, or some other specific act indicative of character. If after twelve years there is nothing to distinguish him from the remainder of his brother officers, he must be singularly unlucky or unfit for promotion, and I recommend that unless he can be recognised amongst his fellows as being better than the average officer his automatic promotion should cease. It would, of course, be necessary to take steps to safeguard the interests of officers. Special stress should be laid on the necessity of bringing forward in an officer's confidential report any matter in which he had particularly excelled since last inspection. It should be recorded whether he had worked in such a manner as to entitle him to special consideration, and an addition would have to be made to the confidential report forms to allow of this being done. An officer would have the power of appeal which he at present enjoys, but no so-called right of promotion should be admitted.' That is the keynote. That answers your question. I have been striving for that for thirty years, and we have got a little nearer.

4,340. I would follow generally the German rule: pass over a man once, and say to him, 'Look out'; pass over him twice,

and say, 'Go and seek another profession; you will not do for us.'

4,247. But you do not answer my question: how are you going to avoid selection by favouritism?—I would say by penalizing, punishing, the man who does it; that is the only way.

APPENDIX T

THE DEFICIENCY OF OFFICERS ON MOBILIZATION

SIR COLERIDGE GROVE

9,381. WHAT do you desire to say with regard to the supply of officers ?—Do you wish me to go at once into any lessons to be derived from this war ?—because I think there is a very great lesson to be derived from it, with regard to the supply of officers, which I am prepared to indicate if you wish me to go into that at once. I will take first the preparedness for war. I would say, as regards the supply of officers and our state of preparedness with regard to that supply, before the war, we were prepared for the supply of what may be called the establishment laid down for us—namely, the supply of the officers for two Army Corps for foreign service. But we were not prepared for the very much larger demand which came upon us from many directions during the course of the war, as it developed. I should like to say, further, that unless our existing system is changed in a very important particular, we never can be prepared for any large extra demand, because an officer is the one thing that is absolutely impossible to improvise. If he is to be of value as such, when you want him on emergency, he must have had training as an officer beforehand, and therefore you require, in order to meet any extra demand, to have some form of reserve upon which to draw. Now, the Reserve of Officers, as it is called, although useful up to a certain point, fails to meet the great requisite that comes as this demand for officers extends—namely, the demand for officers in the junior ranks. The officers in the Reserve, as you know, are most of them senior officres, or, if

they are not senior officers by rank, they are in a large proportion oldish men. They have left the service for some time, and, apart from the fact that they are more or less out of touch with the later developments of training, and weapons, and military law, and all those sort of things, they are also unfitted by their age to be subalterns and junior captains, and it is in subalterns and junior captains that you want this great supply. Just to show what the supply required really may amount to, I may mention that during the eighteen months between January 1, 1900, and midsummer, 1901, I had to find over 3,000 officers in excess of the normal supply for the British Army.

9,382. That is including the Auxiliaries ?—No, not including the Auxiliaries: for the Regular forces I had to find over 3,000 Regular officers.

9,383. The only way, it appears to me, in which you can meet this difficulty is by having with your various military units in peace a very large excess of the officers that are absolutely required for the duty connected with that unit. You must have your Reserve 'serving,' if I may use the expression. You cannot let your officer go back to civil life, as you can your Reservist, and leave him there to forget what he knows, or if you do he will not be as good as he ought to be when called up. You ought to have with all your Regular forces at home—I say it advisedly—at least twice their present establishment of officers.

9,384. And especially in the junior ranks ?—Especially in the junior ranks—twice the number, and the increase to be, in the main, in the junior ranks. This is the only way I can see in which you can meet the very great demand that there is for extra officers (whenever we are engaged on any war), and also by which you will be able to help the Auxiliary forces, when they are embodied, with trained officers to start them in the proper direction.

9,385. Would you keep these Reserve officers with the regiments abroad, as well as at home ?—No; I would keep them, in the main, at home, for this reason—that the fact of having this larger number of officers at home will enable a good many of them to be always away from their unit, attending classes

of instruction, or with their affiliated Militia or Volunteers. One of the difficulties at present in the way of instructing an officer in his profession is that he is wanted with his regiment, and that when he applies to go to the School of Military Engineering, or some similar school, his Colonel says: 'No; I cannot spare you.' If you had more officers you would be enabled to have a good many of them always away, and you could then increase your schools, and much more largely develop your system of military schools of instruction, and have some officers going through these various schools and obtaining certificates of merit of different qualities, which would affect their promotion and their career.

SIR EVELYN WOOD

4,093. Would you say what you wish to say with regard to the supplies of officers and men?—I should say that the question as regards the officers and men may be summed up as follows: That within my knowledge we have never had sufficient officers, and that on the outbreak of a war we set to work to form a staff and to form colonial levies, which in the late war amounted to 50,000 men; and although the bulk of the colonial levies found their own subordinate officers, yet the leaders and commanders were nearly always Imperial officers. . . . We then formed bodies of mounted infantry. I think during the war they amounted to about 20,000 regular mounted infantry—that is to say, red or green-jacketed soldiers on horses. For every mounted infantry company you require five officers. In a foot company, from which the mounted infantry officers are always taken, you have only two and a half officers per company, and consequently you bleed the foot regiments for the sake of the mounted people. . . . All these causes help to take away the officers. And even in peace-time, out of every twenty officers in a battalion, four are legally, inside the King's Regulations, taken away from the training of the men whom they should be teaching how to kill the enemy to do what we call regimental staff work. Assistant-Adjutant, signalling officer, mounted in-

fantry, and transport officer—all these are taken out of the officers who are supposed to be teaching the young soldier how to prepare himself for war.

4,277. I understand you said that there are difficulties in getting officers for the Army. What is the chief cause?—So long as you insist that a man coming into a line regiment shall have a *minimum* of £120 a year, preferably £150, and to go into a cavalry regiment he shall not have less than £500 a year, private income, so long you will have a dearth of officers. My observations applied rather to the fact that the country has never paid enough. I did not mean to individuals, but that they have never authorized a sufficient establishment; that, having said there were twenty officers, they then took away always five, and generally seven, and said, 'Now go on and do the work of the twenty,' and it was muddled through. But when the crisis came the officers could not be in the two places.

4,326. We have steadily declined to face the expense of having any officers in the Army for the staff. We have a large number of officers on the staff, but we have hitherto paid for them by taking them out of the regiments to a very great extent.

4,125. If you will allow me to revert for one moment to the shortage of officers, my remedy will be very costly. I quite understand 'more officers, more money.' But think of what happens in war. As I have stated here, I know one officer who has tried to pay—I cannot say he did try to drill the men, for he could not—but he had 850 men under his command during the war, of whom half were in Hounslow Barracks and half were in Aldershot.

4,129. During the war I saw a statement which I cut out of a newspaper and I tried to verify—and I think it was substantially accurate—that during the war, at Woolwich, with 4,500 artillerymen, there were only 17 doing-duty officers there, of whom 10 were second lieutenants—young fellows who had just joined.

LORD ROBERTS

10,661. We have no Reserve of officers at all adequate to our requirements.

10,277. What we chiefly want for mobilization purposes are junior officers. We want several hundreds. Officers are required at once to complete the war establishment of the cavalry and infantry regiments, for ammunition columns, for, in fact, all kinds of purposes—signalling, transport, increase in the Army Service Corps, special service, etc. There is no Reserve to fall back upon as regards the junior ranks. Older officers sometimes go into the Reserve as Captains, Majors, and Lieutenant-Colonels. Some of them may be available; but the great demand is for subalterns, and there are very few of that rank in the Reserve of officers.

10,306. We also had evidence from a former Adjutant-General that there is a great shortness of officers, even for the ordinary regimental work—that they are always being taken away for various duties. He was speaking of the past, not of the present?—That was true. Officers were taken away for the Staff College and other courses without being seconded. This was undesirable, as the officers left with the regiment suffered, and commanding officers often objected to letting their best officers leave; but it has now been remedied so far as the Staff College is concerned. All officers joining it are now seconded. I would gladly see all officers who go away on the staff, whether for a short or long period, seconded. It passes more officers through regiments, and more officers are consequently available when war comes.

10,362. And you have not been able at the War Office to discover a system by which you could get over that difficulty, and keep up a sufficient body of officers?—It is a matter that has given us most serious consideration how to do that.

10,363. A good many difficulties would be got over if you could keep the Militia especially, and also the Volunteers, more complete in officers?—Yes; and if we could be sure that the officers were efficient.

INDEX

Aboukir, 268
Abyssinia, 6, 149, 152, 273
Aden, 73, 85, 146
Adjutant-General's Department, 94, 128, 158, 268, 273, 274, 302
Administration, Board system of, 161, 163, 164-177
Admiralty, Board of, 164, 170, 296
Afghanistan, 6, 127, 146, 273
Africa, Central, 72; British, unsurveyed, 284; Eastern, 6, 72; North-Eastern, 6; South, in relation to the military front of the Empire, 7, 220; should be main base of Regular Army, 8, 255; climate of, 62, 64, 220; necessary force for, 62, 85, 257; administration of Army in, 65; cost of living in, 66; trade of, 71; breeding-ground for horses, 72; emigration to, 75; service in unpopular, 76; should be on Home Establishment, 62-81, 219, 260; war in (*vide* War in South Africa)
Agincourt, 117
Aldershot, 47, 85, 247
Altham, Colonel, 129, 151, 276
America, Central and South, 149; United States of, relations with Canada, 5; army of, 122, 149; possibility of war with, 214
Arabia, 6
Archery, 117, 227
Ardagh, Sir John, on war in South Africa, 11, 129; on army corps system, 33; on Intelligence Department, 133, 140, 142
Argentine, the, 72
Army, the British, expenditure on, 3, 15, 17, 39, 48, 52, 70, 89, 214, 226, 258; for what purposes required, 3, 52, 212; complementary to the Navy, 213; establishment of, 9, 58, 87; separation between Imperial Army and local defence forces, 10, 42; strength at beginning of war in South Africa, 15; non-effectives in, 16; a make-believe army, 18, 21, 39, 48, 215; quality of, 238-240; as a garrison, 40; prejudice against, 45; training of, 46, 247-249; regimental character of, 56; period of service in, 83; distribution of, 84, 86, 225, 255; a division of, should be localized at sea, 225, 226; foreign service, 86, 91, 225; Royal Commission on departments of, in 1805, 266; staff of, during Peninsular and Crimean Wars, 266
Army corps scheme, 20, 27-38, 69, 257, 261; compared with Indian system, 36; cost of, 70; First Army Corps, 23; composition of, 24; Second Army Corps, duties of, 24; commander of, 25; Third Army Corps, 26; Fourth Army Corps, 26, 95; Fifth Army Corps, 27, 95; Sixth Army Corps, 27, 95
Army Service Corps, 158, 270
Artillery, garrison, 87; mobile, 104; in India, 136; training of, 248
Ashanti, 127

Asia, Central, 146
Atlantic Ocean, Southern, 8
Auditor-General, 176
Australia, in relation to the military front of the Empire, 7; should be a base of the Regular Army, 8, 255; climate of, 62; shipping of, 71
Austria, 75, 149
Auxiliary Forces (*vide* also Volunteers, etc.), Headquarters Staff of, 94; lack of organization of, 94; deficiency of officers in, 99, 311; cost of, 107

Baden-Powell, General, 201
Bandar Abbas, 225
Barbados, 85
Barracks, 44, 48, 68
Battalions, size of, 59, 85; rotation of, 83
Beira, 71
Belgium, 149
Bermuda, 85
'Black week,' the, 1
Bloemfontein, 64, 242
Boers, the, 93
Bombay, 71
Boxer outbreak, the, 226
Brackenbury, Sir H., 169
Brodrick, Mr.: criticism of his military policy, 12, 70, 257; his reforms, 19-53; his army corps scheme, 20-34, 216, 217; creation of Royal Garrison Regiment by, 39, 40; his attitude to the recruiting problem, 42-45, 58; organization of Education branch at the War Office, 49; improvements in condition of the R.A.M.C. introduced by, 50; unites Mobilization and Intelligence Departments, 52; on administration of the Army, 165, 166; his system of classifying officers, 206; on expense of the Army in South Africa, and proposed charge on the Indian Government, 70, 257, 258
Budgets (*vide* under Army, Navy, expenditure on)
Bulgaria, 141, 149
Buller, Sir Redvers, 3; his army in Natal, 32; on military policy, 133; as Adjutant-General, 158; on promotion by selection, 303
Burma, 146, 273
Burnham, the American scout, 150
Butler, Sir W., 25

Cadet corps, 45, 112, 118, 221, 227, 262
Cadres, 69, 85, 219
Cæsar's Camp, 235
Cambridge, Duke of, 298
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H., 12, 130, 161, 293
Canada, frontier of, 5, 258; relations with the United States, 5; in relation to the military front of the Empire, 7; should be a main base of the Regular Army, 8, 85, 224, 255; climate of, 62; Militia of, 81
Canteens, 76
Cardwell, Lord, 13; his military system, 13, 15, 20, 39, 54, 56
Cavalry, equipment and training of, 46, 66; the Household, 91; expenses in, 197, 310
Ceylon, 85
Chamberlain, Mr., 69, 143
Chesham, Lord, 94
China, 6, 13
City Imperial Volunteers, 186
Coaling-stations, 86
Coke, General, 189, 248
Colenso, 131, 144, 149, 260
Collen, Sir E., 136, 147
Colonies, conference of Prime Ministers of, 80
Colvile, General: on army corps system, 33; on discipline, 182; on non-commissioned officers, 192; on subject of pay, 199; on promotion, 205
Command system, 35-38, 64, 80, 97; in India, 36; suggested organization and distribution of commands, 255
Commander-in-Chief, 130, 158, 218, 269; his position, 160, 162, 288, 291, 300; abolition of, recommended, 291, 298, 300

Commissariat, 157
Commissary-General, 174, 302
Congo Free State, 149
Conscription, 45
Cowans, Lieutenant-Colonel J. S., 51
Crabbe, Colonel, 181, 201
Cressy, 117
Crete, 149
Crimean War, 121, 268
Cuba, 122
Cubicles, 44
Curragh, the, 248
Cyclists, 97, 103, 255

Darley, Sir F., 262
Davidson, Colonel W. L., 248
Dawkins, Sir Clinton, 51
De Aar, 143
De Bloch, M., 9
De Wet, 208
Deane, Colonel T., 277
Defence, Imperial Council of, 52, 169, 218, 228, 257; policy of, 259, 261
Delagoa Bay, 71, 73
Denmark, 149
Depots, regimental, 60; remount, 72; staff of, 87
Diamond Hill, 235
Diego Suarez, 225
Doornkop, 235
Doyle, Sir A. Conan, 179, 240
Drakensberg, the, 66
Drill-books, 46
Dupin, M. Charles, 268
Durban, 71, 86, 225

Edge, Sir J., 262
Education of officers, 49, 195, 221; of N.C.O's, 193; of private soldiers, 187, 188; Commission on, 49, 78; department at War Office, 157; national military, 109, 110-118, 262-265
Edward I., 117
Egypt, 65, 149; army in, 87; climate of, 87; strategical importance of, 87
Elandslaagte, 235
Emerson's 'English Traits,' 4
Empire, the British, defence of, 2; strategic position of, 3; strategical front of, 6; geographical distribution of, 7; suggested distribution of military commands in, 255
Engineers, 87
Enlistment, term of, 43, 83
Enteric fever, 64, 242
Entrenchments, forbidden by Manœuvres Act, 47
Esher, Lord, 163, 176, 262; on War Office organization, 295-300
Esprit de corps, 56, 183, 207
Establishment, proposed peace and mobilization strength of, 256

Fatigue duties, 48
Field-firing, 248
Foreign Office, the, 134
Fortifications, Inspector-General of, 289
France, defeated by Prussia, 14, 121; army of, 31; military topography in, 279
French, General, 24, 201, 253; on lack of decentralization, 253
French Revolution, 231
Fripp, A. D., 200
Front, strategical: explanation of term, 6; of British Empire, 6; troops must have speedy access to, 12, 58, 70, 225

Garrison Regiment (*vide* Royal Garrison Regiment)
Gatacre, Sir William, 5, 239; on South Africa, 66; on military training, 189, 247
German Army, the, field organization of, 28, 30; General Staff of, 151, 231; system of inspection in, 201; non-commissioned officers of, 193; system of promotion in, 305
Germany, military publications in, 146; military topography in, 280
Gibraltar, 39, 62, 85
Glasgow, 248
Goldie, Sir G. Taubman-, on national military training, 262-265; on War Office organization, 295, 300, 301

Grant, Lieutenant-Colonel S., 145
Great Britain, 4, 7, 8
Greece, 149
Grey, Sir George, 80
Griqualand, 66
Grove, Sir C., 3; on supply of officers, 307-309
Guards, the, 85, 86, 91, 207, 242

Haig, Colonel, 131, 178, 201, 277, 278
Hamilton, General Bruce, 205, 277
Hamilton, Lord George, 258
Hamilton, Sir Ian, 66, 129; on modern tactics, 231-237; on needs of the Army, 238
Hanover, 258
Hart, General, 144
Hartington Commission, the, 51, 129, 161, 173; recommendations of, 291-294
Henderson, Colonel, 46
Hildyard, General, 157, 185, 239, 247
Hills, Major E. H., on mapping requirements, 279-287
Home Establishment, 62
Hong Kong, 62, 83, 85
Horse-fittings on ships, 72
Hospitals Commission, the, 242
Hunter, Sir A., 149, 193, 201, 239, 242

Imperial Light Horse, 186
Imperial Reserve Regiment, 42, 83, 91
Imperial Strategical Department, 151
Imperial Yeomanry (*vide* Yeomanry)
India, climate of, 7, 61; keystone of British military position, 7; garrison of in 1870, 14; mutiny in, 14; plan of mobilization in, 36; proposed contribution from, towards Army expenditure, 70, 257, 259; Commander-in-Chief in, 81; garrison of, 85; military Budget of, 259; relations of, with War Office, 135, 146, 166, 259-293; drafts for, 260, 265; Quartermaster-General's Department in, 270
Indian Ocean, 8, 71
Infantry, distribution of, 85, 225
Inspector-General of the Forces, 175, 218
Intelligence Department (*vide* also Mobilization and Intelligence Department), 52, 129, 133, 139, 218, 416; in India, 129
Ireland, 26
Italy, 72, 141

Jackson, Sir J., 295
Japan, 141, 146; alliance with, 147
Jena, battle of, 122

Kamschatka, 6
Karroo, the, 66
Kelly-Kenny, General, on a make-believe army, 18, 239; on army corps system, 32; on recruiting, 42, 244-246; on mental qualifications for the Army, 242; on physique of the Army, 242; on War Office, 51, 163
King, the, as Commander-in-Chief, 166, 218
Kingston Military College, 195
Kitchener, Lord, 199, 208; on officers' training, 201
Knox, Sir C., 25, 66; on military training in schools, 111; on Intelligence Department, 150; on mental qualifications for the Army, 242
Kruger, President, 143

Ladysmith, 64, 129
Lake, Colonel, 151
Lansdowne, Lord, 109
Liberia, 149
Loch, Lord, 143
'Long service,' 55

Macbean, Colonel, 75, 248, 249
Magersfontein, 181
Malta, 39, 85
Manchester Regiment, 56
Manœuvres, cost of, 65, 67, 190; value of, 120; Manœuvres Act, 47, 221, 247
Maps, 138, 144; requirements, 279-287

Married quarters, soldiers', 44
Maskat, 146
Maurice, Sir F., 151
Mauritius, 85
Mediterranean Sea, 8, 61
Merv, 13
Mesopotamia, 6
Methuen, Lord, 96, 100, 144, 202, 238, 239; on rifle-shooting, 179, 185; on physique of the Army, 242
Mexico, 149
Militia, 56, 77, 82, 282, 246; officers of, 99, 196; establishment of, 105; deficiency of officers in, 311; Canadian, 81
Mobility in modern war, 11; strategical, 12
Mobilization and Intelligence Department, 52, 133, 145, 218, 289
Modder River, the, 144
Montenegro, 149
Morocco, 149
Motor-cars, 103
Motor Volunteer Corps, the, 103
'Mournful Monday,' 131
Murray, Colonel A. J., 242

Napoleon: his art of war, 4, 231; his *corps d'armée*, 29; overthrow of, 122
Natal, 71, 144; cost of mapping, 260
Navy, the British: naval supremacy, 3; expenditure on, 3, 214; relation to Army, 12, 213, 225; functions of, 40, 58, 92, 213; training of, 49
Netherlands, the, 149
New Zealand, 71, 80, 225, 255
Nicholson, Sir W., on use of railways, 23; on command system in India, 36, 128; on Intelligence Department, 52, 142, 145, 150; on Quartermaster-General's Department, 266-271
Nicholson's Nek, 235
Non-commissioned officers, function of, 50, 192; training of, 192; in German Army, 193; Swiss schools for, 194; pay of, 221
Normandy, 258
Norway, 149
Numbers, on peace and war footings, 256

Officers, education of, 49, 195, 221; training of, 192-210, 247-249; expenses of, 196; class of candidates, 197, 199; pay of, 198, 221, 310; in South African War, 199, 200; lack of initiative in, 200; employed on civilian duties, 201; promotion of, by merit, 204, 205, 207, 209, 303-306; supply of, 307-311; reserve of, 307; naval, 201, 202, 205
Officers' servants, 251
Okehampton, 248
Orange River Colony, the, 66
Ordnance, Director-General of, 289
O'Rorke, Sir G. M., 80
Ottoman Empire, the, 149

Pacific Ocean, the, 8
Paget, General, 200
Party Government, system of, 2
Pay, of officers, 198, 221, 310; of non-commissioned officers, 221; of private soldiers, 38, 44, 187, 221, 223, 245; of Volunteers, 107
Peking, 149, 259
Peninsular War, the, 266, 273
Penjdeh, 13
Persia, 13, 146, 147
Philippines, the, 122
Physical training, 114
Physique, national, 113; of the soldier, 180, 184, 242
Plumer, General, 182, 239, 251, 278
Poitiers, 117
Pole-Carew, General, 64, 241, 247, 277
Port Arthur, 13, 225
Portugal, 149
Pretoria, 143
Prussia in 1806, 21
Punjab, the, 37

Quartermaster-General's Department, 128, 132, 157, 289; history of, 266-271, 273; reorganization of, in 1889, 269, 274

Railways in the United Kingdom, 23, 118
Recruiting problem, the, 42, 45, 58, 75, 88, 184, 187, 223, 244-246, 264
'Reformer,' letter from, to the *Times*, 257-261
Reimer, D., German map publisher, 280
Remounts, 72
Reserve, the Army, 60, 62, 74, 83, 88, 221, 250; the naval, 118
Riet River, 144
Rifle, the Lee-Enfield, 16, 189; clubs, 45, 109; shooting, 179, 185
Roberts, Lord, 3; his army at Bloemfontein, 30; improvement in soldiers' position introduced by, 44; on rifle-shooting, 179; on individuality, 182; on officers, 200; on supply of officers, 311; on the quality of the Army, 241; on lack of training-grounds, 247; on staff work, 272-276; on War Office organization, 288-290
Robertson, Lieutenant-Colonel, 146
Roosevelt, President, 122
Root, Mr., 122
Royal Army Medical Corps, 50
Royal Garrison Regiment, 39, 40, 83, 91, 220, 221
Royal Military College, origin of, 267 (*vide* also Sandhurst)
Rumania, 141, 149
Rundle, Sir L., 25, 56
Russell, Lieutenant-General Sir B., 26
Russia, 146, 258, 259; military topography in, 281

St. Petersburg, 149
Salisbury, 25, 47, 248
Sandhurst, 195, 262
Sanitation, 64
Scarbrough, Lord, 197
Scotland, 151
Seddon, Mr., 80
Servia, 149
Service in Army, length of, 55, 83, 88, 221
Shanghai, 226
Siam, 146
Siberia, 6, 147
Signalling, 206, 253
Singapore, 85
Sokotra, 146
Soldiers, private, pay of, 38, 44, 187, 221, 223, 245; class of men enlisted as, 39, 41, 42, 57, 184, 241-245; improved position of, 44; prejudice against, 45; employed on civilian duties, 48, 188, 201, 250; health of, 50, 57, 64, 113; physique of, 180, 184, 242; training of, 178-191, 203, 247-249, 250, 263; discipline of, 181; education of, 187, 188, 241, 242
Spain, 72
Spion Kop, 144, 149, 260
Staff, a General: need for, 11, 119-136, 214, 272, 276, 292; advocated by Hartington Commission, 12, 293; nucleus of, 52; duties of, 122, 214, 217, 228, 275, 290, 292; qualities necessary for, 125; in the United States of America, 122; in Prussia, 123, 134, 140
Staff College, the, 204
Staff work, in peace and war, 131, 272, 273
Staffordshire Regiment, the, 56
Stopford, General, 131
Stormberg, 143
Suez Canal, 7, 226
Sweden, 149
Symons, General, 145

Tactics, development of, 179, 231-237, 252
Taubman-Goldie, Sir G. (*vide* Goldie)
Teheran, 149, 259
Territorial commands, 36
Territorial system, 56
Thames, the defence of mouth of, 24
Thorneycroft, Colonel, 239
Tibet, 152
Times, the, 69, 257
Tirah campaign, the, 185
Tokio, 149
Topographical section, 284-287
Training-grounds, lack of, 47, 247-249

Transcaucasia, 147
Transport and Supply Department, 274, 290
Transvaal, cost of manœuvres in, 67; mines in, 71; war in (*vide* War in South Africa)
Turkey, 141, 146
Turner, General Sir A. E., 202

University, candidates for the Army, 195; a military, 195

Vancouver, 225
Vikings, the, 227
Vimeira, 268
Vincent, Sir H., 94
Volunteers, 56, 73, 89, 93, 96, 104, 186, 220, 241, 246, 264; training of, 95, 106, 246; physique of, 242; organization of, 94, 255; deficiency of officers in, 99, 311; pay of, 107; cost of, 107; Australian, 107; motor corps of, 103
Von Danckelman, Baron, 280
Von Moltke: organization of German armies by, 30, 126; conduct of 1870 war, 127

Wagon Hill, 235
War in South Africa, the, 13, 32, 129; lessons of, 10, 46, 178; causes of failure in, 10, 154, 270; army corps system in, 32; official history of, 151
War Office (*vide* also departmental headings): remedies for evils as suggested by Hartington Commission, 51; attitude of to the Auxiliary Forces, 95; its relation to the Colonies, 197; organization of, 154-177, 288-290, 295-300, 302; topographical section of, 284-287
War, Secretary of State for, duties and position of, 172, 288, 291, 295
Warren, General, 84, 247
Waterval Drift, 131
Wei-hai-Wei, 225
Wellington, Duke of, 29, 128, 267, 271, 298
White, Sir G., 129
Wolseley, Lord, on compulsory military training, 111; as Adjutant-General, 158; as Commander-in-Chief, 163; on subject of pay, 198; on promotion, 205; on quality of the Army, 241
Wood, Sir E., on South African War, 11; on a make-believe army, 18, 238; commander of Second Army Corps, 25, 250; on administration of the Army, 162, 250; on lack of training-grounds, 248; on promotion by selection, 303-306; on supply of officers, 309-311
Woolwich, 262

Yeomanry, Inspector-General of, 94; terms of enlistment in, 106; in South African War, 186; physique of, 242; suggested organization of, 255

Zambesi River, 72

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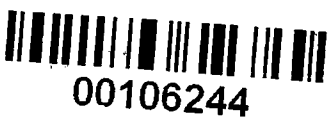
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